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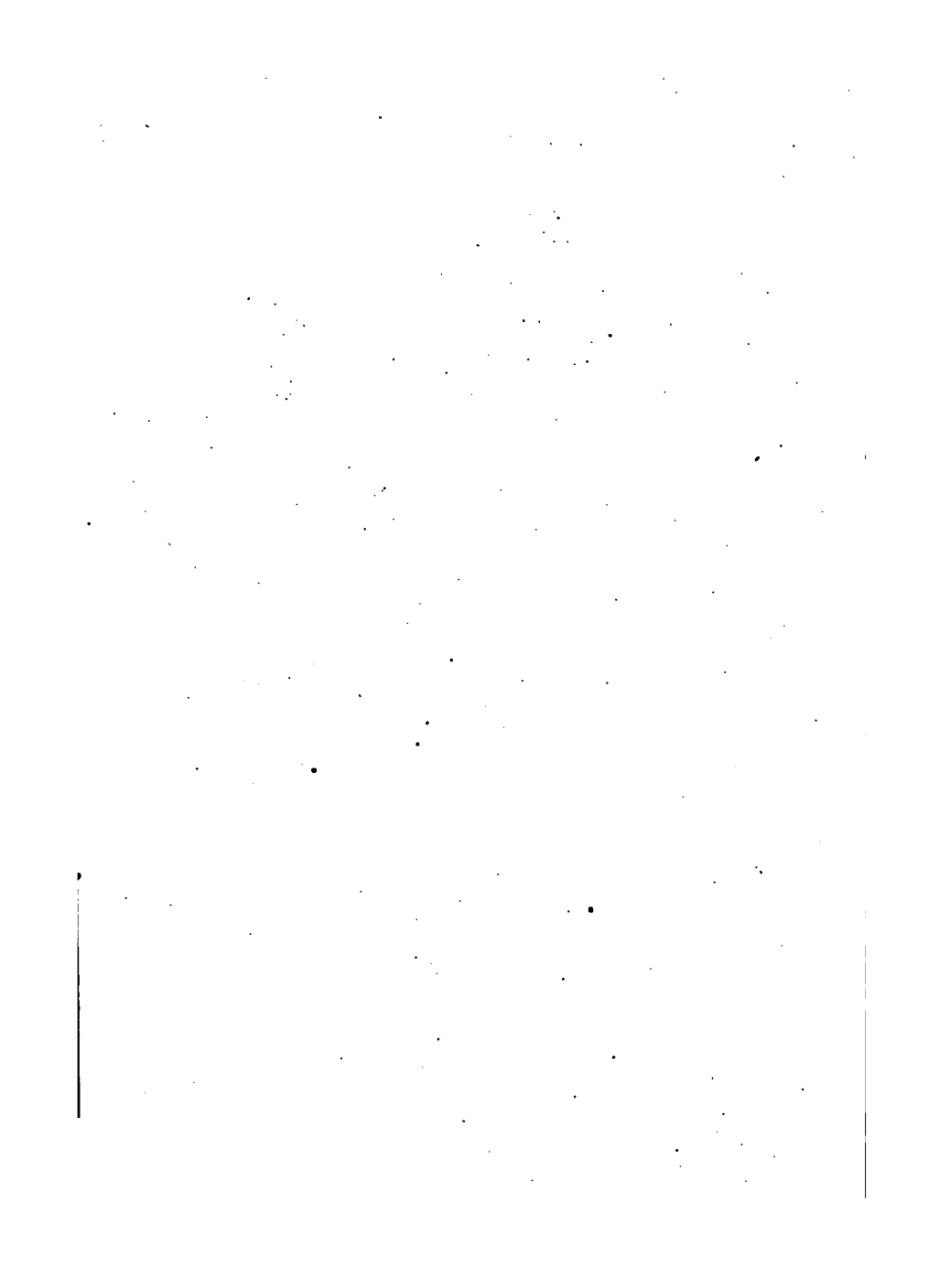
St. Chrysostom's



Religion of his Age.



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PICTURE OF THE
RELIGION OF HIS AGE.

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ST. CHRYSOSTOM'S

PICTURE OF THE RELIGION

OF HIS AGE.

Part II.

CHAPTER I.

THE WORD OF GOD.

Versions of Holy Scripture.—History of the Septuagint.—
Books of the New Testament.—Method of Interpretation.
—Diffusion of the Scriptures.—Preaching the Word.

IF the reader were to be furnished with no further information than is contained in the Author's work on the social aspect of the age in which St. Chrysostom lived,¹ he might conclude, not only that religion was exceedingly corrupted, but also that Christianity had almost ceased to exist in the regions where St. Chrysostom discharged the duties of his ministry. Yet he would thus

¹ *St. Chrysostom's Picture of His Age*, published by S.P.C.K.

fall into error. The people of those countries were remarkable for the intensity both of their vices and their virtues. This partly arose from that fervour of disposition, which is so general amongst the inhabitants of the East; partly from those troubles in which the falling empire was involved, and which offered so many facilities to the lawless for the commission of crime, or opened a pathway of fame to the violent and unscrupulous; but which at the same time taught the pious to raise their hopes above a world which was so miserable, and convinced them that the energy of holiness was necessary if they would stem the tide of crime and corruption. They were arriving in the East at that state which Gregory the Great more than two centuries later described so beautifully as existing in the West, "Behold! now the world is withered in itself, and yet it flourishes in our hearts. Everywhere there is death, and mourning, and destruction; we are smitten on all sides, the bitter cup is handed to us from every quarter, and yet with the blindness of earthly desires we love even the bitterness of the world, we pursue the fleeting world, we hold fast to the sinking world, and since we cannot keep it from sinking, we sink ourselves with it, wishing to retain it as it sinks. Once the world enchanted us by its

amusements; now it is so full of suffering, that of itself it points us to God. The downfall of these earthly things shows how worthless they were, even when they appeared to stand firm. Therefore think upon this, in order to direct your hearts to the love of the Eternal, so that, despising earthly glory, you may attain through our Lord Jesus Christ to that glory which you already profess in faith.”²

In reviewing the picture which St. Chrysostom draws of external and internal religion, I call to mind that he himself was “mighty in the Scriptures,” and that he regarded them as the fountain-head from which all should draw the water of life. I therefore begin by examining the accounts which we have of them, the authority which was attached to them, and the reverence with which they were regarded.

Our Archbishop was a contemporary of St. Jerome, but of course the East had not at that time derived any advantage from the studies of that great Biblical translator. There the Old Testament was represented by three versions of the Septuagint, except, perhaps, in Osdroene and Mesopotamia where Syriac was the vulgar tongue, and they possessed a Syriac translation from the Hebrew. Constantinople and all the

² Neander's *Memorials of Christian Life*, part iii. chap. 4.

Asiatic Churches as far as Antioch used a version of the Septuagint.³

So generally was the Septuagint used throughout the East, that people commonly supposed the Scriptures of the Old Testament were originally composed in Greek. St. Chrysostom, therefore, favoured his congregation with the following account of the origin of the Septuagint:—"All the sacred books of the Old Testament were from the commencement composed in the language of the Hebrews, and all would agree with us on this point. For not many years before Christ's advent⁴ a certain king named Ptolemy, who was very zealous in collecting books, and had collected many and great varieties, thought that he ought to collect these books also. He sent, therefore, for some Jews from Jerusalem, and charged them to translate them into Greek. Thus was the work completed for him. Indeed this was a work of God's dispensation, in order that not only such as are versed in Hebrew, but also all the dwellers in the world might reap the benefit of it. And truly it was remarkable and wonderful that

³ Cave's *Life of St. Chrysostom*; Bingham's *Antiquities*, book xiv. chap. 3.

⁴ In another passage he says three hundred years. *De Prophet. Obscuritate, Homil. ii. § 2.*

none of those who hold Jewish opinions undertook this work, but a man who worshipped idols and was opposed to religion. Thus are all such matters decreed by our Lord; the precepts of truth will always flourish through their opponents. But I have stated these facts, not merely on account of your love, but that you may know that the Scriptures were not composed in our language, but in Hebrew."⁵ Seventy persons were engaged in this work,⁶ and the books thus translated were deposited in the temple of Serapis, where they were still preserved in St. Chrysostom's time.⁷

Many passages of Scripture quoted by St. Chrysostom differ slightly from the Septuagint as it has come down to us; some, because they were adapted by him to the subject on which he was discoursing, as must occasionally be done by all preachers; but other passages, which are over and over again repeated by him, must, we conclude, have certainly been different in the version which he used.⁸ In his commentaries on

⁵ In *Genes. Homil.* iv. § 4.

⁶ In *Hebr. Homil.* viii. § 4.

⁷ *Contra Judæos, Homil.* i. § 6.

⁸ For instance, *Gen.* iv. 5. The Septuagint is similar to our version:—"Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell;" but in St. Chrysostom's version it was—"God made Cain sorrowful." At chap. v. 2, he omitted

the Psalms and Isaiah he sometimes refers specifically to the Septuagint version, and points out how it differs from his version.⁹ He also refers to the readings of Aquila, Symmachus, and not unfrequently to the Hebrew, all of which he might have found in the Hexapla of Origen.

The books of the Old Testament had been destroyed in war, but Esdras had collected the fragments and compiled them afresh.¹⁰ Through the gross neglect of the Jews many books had perished before the Babylonish captivity, at which time many more were lost, and only a few preserved. Deuteronomy was discovered buried in a dunghill.¹ Such are St. Chrysostom's statements, which, with the exception of the last, he deduces from the Scriptures themselves, but perhaps without sufficient reason.

Amongst the genuine works of St. Chrysostom is a synopsis of the Old Testament as far as the prophecy of Nahum. In the introduction he gives a singular evidence of his great regard for the writings of St. Paul.

the words "and blessed them;" at chap. xxxv. 16, he differs from the Septuagint in omitting, as our English version does, the name *Chabrattha*.

⁹ E.g. In *Psalms*. vii. 11; In *Isaiam* li. 1.

¹⁰ In *Hebr. Homil.* viii. § 4.

¹ In 1 *Cor. Homil.* vii. § 3.

When laying down a catalogue of the books of the New Testament, he assigns the first place to the fourteen epistles of St. Paul, and then mentions the four Gospels, two of which, he says, were written by John and Matthew, disciples of Christ, and the other two by Luke and Mark, one a disciple of Peter, the other of Paul. The importance which he thus attached in such a marked manner to St. Paul's writings, appears in all parts of his works. "I burn," he said, "with desire for that man, and therefore I study him incessantly. I look into his soul, as I would on some symbolical image, and I am amazed at his disregard of his passions, his exceeding fortitude, and the flame of his love to God; and I reckon that that one man has by his zeal manifested in himself the whole assemblage of virtues, and that each one of us does not manifest a chance virtue."² St. Paul's compositions were the theme to which he constantly recurred. When preaching on other parts of Scripture he was frequently diverted from his purpose by a quotation from St. Paul, and then, regardless of the digression, he would launch out into a long discourse on the Apostle's words.³

² *In cap. ii. Genes. Homil. x. § 5; De Mutatione Nominum, Homil. i. § 3.*

³ *In illud Isaia, Ego Dominus, &c. Homil. § 3.*

The books of the Apocrypha are referred to by St. Chrysostom as works of authority. The histories of Esdras and Judith are each mentioned once and that incidentally.⁴ The book of Tobit is alluded to three times ; Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, and Maccabees frequently.

The inspired books of the New Testament were according to him the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, fourteen epistles of St. Paul, and three Catholic Epistles, viz. the Epistle of St. James, the first of St. Peter, and the first of St. John. The second and third of St. John, the second of St. Peter, and the Epistle of St. Jude were not acknowledged to be canonical by the Church of Antioch;⁵ nor are they quoted in his expositions. The same must be said of the book of Revelation.

Although St. Chrysostom's method of interpreting Scripture was not general, and differed greatly from the ordinary teaching of the Western Church ; yet it was adopted by such a large school of disciples, that it deserves to be mentioned amongst the characteristics of his age. His expositions which were so popular,

⁴ *Adv. Judæos, Homil. v. § 10 ; In Joan. Homil. lxi. al. lx. § 4.*

⁵ *Montfauc. Diatribæ in Synopsis S. Chrysostomi.*

and had such a remarkable influence upon the cities where he preached, were marked by simplicity and perspicuity. They were spirited and animated, yet plain, and he confined himself to the literal or historical sense, in opposition to many fathers who preferred the allegorical. He was as peculiar for this style, as Luther was in the sixteenth century, and its effects upon the masses were as much distinguished in the case of the Patriarch of Constantinople as in that of the monk of Wurtemberg. He is supposed to have learnt it from Diodorus, afterwards Bishop of Tarsus in Cilicia, who was his early instructor, and who was chiefly instrumental in forming the Antiochene school of theology.

Yet St. Chrysostom by no means wished to exclude allegorical interpretations of Scripture. On the contrary he lays it down as a rule that some passages are to be taken literally, but others have a hidden meaning.⁶ He only desires that an allegorical interpretation should be given merely to such as are clearly allegorical, and that people's minds should not be confused at the will of such commentators as are in love with forced and mystical significations.⁷ But if we were to explain his views further we

⁶ Or anagogical—*Expos. in Psalm. xlv. § 1.*

⁷ *In Isai. cap. v. s. 3.*

should be diverging from our object, which is to exhibit him not as a painter of himself, but of his times.

As to the question, who should be permitted or encouraged to read the Scriptures, all his works satisfy us that it was never contemplated to impose a prohibition upon any. Probably the sacred writings were little known, but the cause of that could not be traced to any ecclesiastical jealousy, or illiberal restriction. The great difficulty of procuring and transcribing copies, and the barbaric darkness, which was every year increasing in denseness, fully accounted for popular ignorance of Holy Writ. Yet St. John's writings, we are told, were translated into the languages of the Syrians, Egyptians, Indians, Persians, Ethiopians, and "innumerable other nations," so that even barbarians learned philosophy. The Syriac translation is mentioned frequently. Not only an unreserved permission, but a positive injunction, was given to all of high and low degree, whether learned or unlearned, to hear the Scriptures in public, and, if possible, to read them in private. An idle fellow would perhaps say,—I am not a Monk, but am involved in domestic cares; how can I read the Bible? "That is it," said the godly Patriarch, "which has corrupted

everything, that you think that the perusal of the sacred Scriptures is appropriate only for monks, whereas you stand much more in need of it. For they who are in the midst of the contest, and receive wounds every day, particularly require healing appliances. But to think that this matter is superfluous, is even worse than not reading them. These are the comments of Satan. Do you not hear St. Paul saying that all these things are written for our admonition?"* Another would plead poverty, but even this excuse, although very plausible when manuscripts were expensive, was not admitted by Chrysostom. "As many of the poorer classes," said he, "are constantly making this excuse, that they have no Bibles, I would like to ask them, can poverty, however great it may be, hinder a man when he does not possess a complete set of the tools required for his trade? What then! Is it not singular that in this case he never thinks of laying the blame on his poverty, but does his best that it may not hinder him; while, on the other hand, in a case where he is to be so great a gainer, he complains of his poverty?"† These passages suggest to us that the Scriptures were then

* *In Matt. Homil. ii. §§ 5, 6.*

† *In Joan. Homil. xi. § 1.*

disused not from any deliberate, exclusive, or ambitious designs of the Clergy, but simply from the apathy and indifference of the laity. To read them was regarded by St. Chrysostom as an evidence of piety; the neglect of them always met with his severe reprobation.¹ It would be easy to multiply passages in proof of these assertions.

The period of which we write was not a reading, but a hearing age; consequently the ordinance of preaching was highly valued. Ordinarily it was a Bishop's special duty to preach, so that his seat was called "the teacher's throne."² But St. Chrysostom, whilst only a Presbyter, was in the habit of preaching,³ and indeed he tells us that Presbyters were always permitted to do so.⁴

Amongst all classes there was a great desire to hear that debased style of eloquence, in which the words and arrangement of sentences were thought of rather than the matter. It became therefore in the first degree necessary that a preacher should study elocution, and if he was skilled in the arts of oratory numbers would

¹ *De Angustâ Portâ Concio*, § 1.

² *In Tit. Homil.* ii. § 2.

³ *In 1 Tim. Homil.* x. § 1; *De Sacerdotio*, lib. v. § 1.

⁴ *In 1 Tim. Homil.* xi. §. 1.

flock to him from all quarters. If on the other hand he was dull and prosy his congregation was not satisfied with turning away from him, but they first treated him with convincing proofs of their disapprobation. If successful, a temptation to indulge in vainglory was peculiarly strong.⁵ When the hearers were affected by the preacher's words they would groan and strike their foreheads,⁶ when pleased, they murmured or even shouted applause and clapped their hands.⁷ St. Chrysostom himself was said to admit that, when thus received, he felt like an infirm human being, until he reflected at home that possibly his congregation had in their acclamation lost all the good they might

⁵ *De Sacerdotio*, lib. v. § 6. "How many," said St. Gregory, "do I find this day who have undertaken the priestly office, but have artificially adorned the simple, artless piety of our religion, and introduced a new sort of secular oratory into the sanctuary, and its holy ministrations, borrowed from the forum and the theatre! So that we have now, if I may so express myself, two stages differing from each other only in this, that the one stands open to all, the other only to a few; the one is laughed at, the other is respected; the one is theatrical, the other clerical." —Ullman's *Life*, by Coxe, sec. iii. chap. 1.

⁶ *Contra Ludos et Theatra*, *Homil.* § 3.

⁷ *In Joan. Homil.* iii. § 1; see Euseb. *Hist. Ecc.* lib. vii. cap. 30, where the heretic, Paul of Samosata, is said to have reproved such hearers as conducted themselves modestly and orderly in God's House, and refused to applaud and clap.

otherwise have attained, and that his preaching might have been to no purpose. He told his hearers that he thought of making a law to forbid all signs of applause, and then added, as if in amazement, "Why do you applaud at the very moment I am proposing a rule to check that practice?"⁸ "Did you praise what has been said?" he exclaimed. "Nay, I want not applause, nor tumults, nor noise. One thing only do I wish, that quietly and intelligently listening, you would do what is said. This is the applause; this the panegyric for me. If you praise what I say, but do not act what you applaud, greater is the punishment, more aggravated the accusation; and to us it is shame and ridicule. For what is here done is no dramatic exhibition; neither do you now sit gazing on actors, that you may merely applaud. This place is a spiritual school."⁹

Two or three sermons were sometimes preached consecutively.¹ Commonly a sermon was delivered in the morning, and one again in the afternoon. We find St. Chrysostom on one

⁸ *In Acta Apost. Homil. xxx. § 4.* See also in 1 Cor. Homil. iv. § 6; xxvi. § 8; *In illud, Si esurierit inimicus tuus, &c., Homil. § 1; De Lazaro Concto, ii. § 3.*

⁹ *In Matt. Homil. xvii. § 7.*

¹ *Homil. in illud, Vidi Dominum, &c. ii. § 3; iii. § 1.*

occasion preaching in the evening, and alluding to his morning sermon preached in the presence of Bishop Flavian.² From several passages we conclude that he delivered discourses in the evening.³ One sermon was expressly designed for such as were ashamed to come after dinner to evening sermon,⁴ and he himself appears to have introduced this custom of preaching in the evening.⁵ There were sermons every day during Lent in some churches.⁶

In the country sermons were less frequently delivered; perhaps in many parishes there were none at all, except on occasion of the Bishop's visitation.⁷

Sermons were usually prepared beforehand, but preachers, if competent, felt themselves at liberty to speak without any premeditation,⁸ and they believed that there were times when, as they proceeded, their words were dictated to them by the Holy Spirit.⁹ "The things to be

² *De Diabolo Tentatore, Homil. ii. § 1.*

³ *Ad Pop. Antioch. Homil. ix. § 1, x. § 1; In Heliam et viduam, Homil. § 1; In Genes. Sermo, iv. § 3.*

⁴ *In cap. i. Genes. Homil. x.*

⁵ *De Lazaro Concio, i. § 9.*

⁶ *In Genes. Homil. xi. § 3.*

⁷ *De Sanctis Martyribus Sermo, § 1.*

⁸ Such was the *Sermo Post reditum ab exsilio.*

⁹ *De verbis, Habentes eundem Spiritum, &c., Homil. i. § 1.*

spoken," said St. Chrysostom, as though trusting himself entirely to Divine guidance "are not our own, but such as the Holy Spirit's grace may inspire," and afterwards in reference to the discourse in which he uttered these words, he added:—"I do not think that I then spoke these things of myself, but that God foreseeing what was coming infused these words into my mind."¹

Bingham is of opinion that the preacher was seated, but St. Chrysostom does not always confirm this. He speaks of himself in one place as rising to preach, but in another as seated on a throne.² It seems probable that Bishops at all events ordinarily sat down, according to a custom which prevailed in the Jewish Church, and was observed by our Saviour.³

There were many at that time who assigned to preaching an exclusive importance, and in consequence undervalued the prayers and other parts of Divine Service. "What do I come for," a man would say, "unless I hear some one

¹ *Ad Pop. Antioch. Homil.* i. § 1, ii. § 3.

² *Ibid. Homil.* xvi. § 1. Socrates, however (*lib. vi. cap. 5*), says that his custom was to sit in the ambo when he preached. See *In Acta Apost. Homil.* viii. *ad finem*. I am unable to verify Bingham's references.

³ See *St. Matt.* v. 1; *xxiii.* 2; *xxvi.* 55; *St. Luke* iv. 20; v. 3; *St. John* viii. 2.

discoursing?" and if at the time of his entrance the Scriptures were being read, he would pay no attention; perhaps would begin to converse with those around him. Some would complain that much of the Bible was unintelligible, and that they heard the same thing over and over again; whereas they required something new in the form of a sermon. "But what need of a person to discourse?" said the preacher. "This necessity arises from our carelessness. Whence any necessity for a homily? All things are clear and open that are in the sacred Scriptures; all things essential are plain. But because you are hearers for pleasure's sake, for that reason also you seek these things."⁴ "We can pray at home," they said; "but we can only hear preaching and doctrine at church." "But what will the sermon profit you," he asks in reply, "if it is not joined with prayer? First prayer, then the word, said the apostles."⁵

There was a polite custom of inviting strange clergy, who were on a visit, to preach shortly after their arrival. In one instance St. Chrysostom invited a venerable Bishop from Galatia to occupy his pulpit; but instead of listening respectfully the congregation were angry, and

⁴ *In 2 Thess. Homil. iii. § 4.*

⁵ *De Incomprehens. Dei Naturâ Homil. iii. § 6.*

went away, as their archbishop declared, "whimpering like whipped boys." They wept, he says, as children, when he hit them in his sermons ; but they were also like children who return to their mother's side, catch hold of her dress, and are dragged along after her with sobs and tears.⁶

⁶ *Homil. in illud, Pater meus usque modo operatur, § 1.*

CHAPTER II.

CHURCHES AND CONGREGATIONS.

Church building and decoration; arrangement.—Ceremonies on entering.—Beggars in the porches.—Irregularity of attendance.—The Lord's Day.—Other Festivals and Fasts.—Behaviour of congregations.—Pick-pockets.—Invidious distinctions.—Gross irreverence.

EDIFICES set apart for public worship had various names; sometimes they were called churches, occasionally temples;¹ and such chapels as were built without the walls of the city at the graves of the martyrs were called *martyria* or oratories. We conclude from the language of St. Chrysostom that churches were no more novelties than they are at present, and that having existed from primitive times, they were regarded even in his days as the works of that generation's pious ancestors.² They had been erected in all parts of the world, inso-

¹ *In illud, Vidi Dominum, &c., Homil. iv. § 1.*

² *In Acta Apost. Homil. xxix. § 3.*

much that they gladdened the eyes of converts even in the island of Britain.³ It was his desire to have a church built wherever a small congregation met together, and he insisted that every man of property should have one upon his estate for the benefit of his tenants and labourers. "Is it not right," he asks "that each of the faithful should build a church, that he should take to himself a teacher to confer with, and that he should make this a primary consideration, so that all may be Christians? How, I ask, will the countryman ever become a Christian when he sees you so careless about his salvation? Cannot you show outward marks, and thus persuade him? Persuade such as you have influence over by kindness, friendliness, gentleness, obliging attentions, and other such means. Many build market-places and baths, but never a church; everything rather than this. Therefore I exhort, I implore, I ask as a favour, rather I lay down a law that no one may have an estate without a church. Tell me not, 'It is near, and in the neighbourhood of, the city; the expense is great; there is little resort to it.' If you have any money to spend on the poor spend it there; better there than here; support a teacher, support a deacon and

³ *Quod Christus sit Deus, Homil. § 12.*

an ecclesiastical establishment." He also adds that the church must be endowed, that the benefits of having a good clergyman will soon be seen in the improvement of the work-people, and that the church will be found better for them than baths and public houses which others build. Lastly he draws a charming picture of a parish in which a faithful and respected clergyman has been labouring.⁴

That natural desire to decorate the House of God, which is followed by taste and skill in ecclesiastical architecture, had doubtless been always entertained by sincere and orthodox Christians, but opportunity of displaying it was lacking, until Constantine the Great did all in his power to encourage the erection of churches. St. Chrysostom's faithful and devoted friend, who constantly acted under his advice, the Deaconess Olympias, was a constant and liberal decorator of sacred buildings, and his encouragement of religious processions and symbols showed that he was himself an admirer of æsthetic principles. Yet he took pains to preserve them from degenerating into superstition, and spoke as strongly as could any man against the spirit of those who loved to garnish the visible House of God, but neglected

⁴ In *Acta Apost. Homil.* xviii. §§ 4, 5.

to purify the heart, so that that might be dedicated as a temple to His glory. The passage in which he alludes to this matter is curious as showing the tendencies both of true and false piety. At the metropolis it was customary to offer for the Holy Table golden and jewelled cups, which were regarded as consecrated immediately they were designed for that service, and were no longer carelessly handled like ordinary vessels. The Table itself was of silver, or at least overlaid with silver, and had a silk covering spangled with gold. Generally the vessels were of gold, and pavement, walls, pillars, and capitals were all highly ornamented. In certain parts also of the interior votive offerings were suspended by silver chains. All this, said St. Chrysostom, is very good; by no means let these be sold, nor undo what has been done. I do not forbid munificence in these matters, but never forget that your first considerations should be, the state of your hearts and the relief of the poor. "Do not whilst adorning God's House overlook your distressed brother, for he is more properly a temple than the other."³

The church in which St. Chrysostom minis-

³ In *Matt. Homil.* l. al. li. §§ 3, 4; lxxx. al. lxxxi. § 2
De Annâ Sermo, iii. § 2.

tered was of such solid structure and lofty height that it offered a most refreshing and inviting coolness when the sun was pouring down its fiercest rays.⁶ He remarked that formerly men and women used to sit together, but manners had become so corrupt that in his time it was necessary to have a boarded partition with the men on one side, and the women on the other.⁷ The altar, or as it was frequently called, 'the Table,' and 'the Holy Table,' was made of stone,⁸ and he never spoke of it but with the deepest reverence. On it was a cross, and at ordinary times it was concealed from view by a curtain, which was drawn up for the celebration of the Eucharist.⁹ In St. Chrysostom's church there were several fonts for Baptism,¹ each of which was styled *Columbethra*, or a pool, and was the same as the *Piscina* of the Latins.² I have already stated that churches

⁶ *In illud, Si esurierit inimicus tuus, &c., Homil. § 2.*

⁷ *In Matt. Homil. lxxiii. al. lxxiv. § 3.*

⁸ *In Joan. Homil. xli. al. xlv. § 4; lxxiv. al. lxxxiii. § 3.*

⁹ *Contra Judæos et Gentiles.*

¹ *Ep. ad Innocent. § 3.*

² *Adv. Anomæos, Homil. xii. § 1.* The term "piscina" was applied to the natatorium, or cold-bath of the Romans. This bath was also called λούτρον (see *Titus* iii. 5) by the Greeks, and "baptisterium" by the Romans.—Becker's *Gallus*, Excursus i. sc. vii.

were revered as sanctuaries, in which persons accused of crimes found refuge and protection.

People were required to enter a church with reverence. The emperor laid aside his diadem and the symbols of majesty.³ All were anxious to come in clean and neat garments. Fountains were placed in the courts before the entrance, that those who were coming to worship might wash their hands, and thus be reminded that purity of heart is required of all who approach the throne of grace, or, as the Psalmist expresses it, that they should say, "I will wash my hands in innocency, and so will I come unto Thine altar."⁴ It was also customary for them to kiss the porch, or else to touch it with their hands, and then put their hands to their lips.⁵ They were taught that the holy angels were present in church, and that they might be discerned by the eye of faith;⁶ that around the altar in particular the heavenly powers were assembled to do honour to their Lord.⁷

³ *Sermo post reditum ab exilio*, § 2; *In Matt. Homil.* li. al. lii. § 4.

⁴ *In Joan. Homil.* lxxiii. al. lxxii. § 3; *In 1 Cor. Homil.* xliii. § 4; *In illud, Habentes eundem Spiritum*, *Homil.* iii. § 11. They also washed their hands before touching the book of the Holy Gospel. *Ad Pop. Antioch. Homil.* vii. § 5.

⁵ *In 2 Cor. Homil.* xxx. § 2.

⁶ *In Ascens. D. N. J. Christi. Homil.* § 1.

⁷ *De Sacerdotio*, lib. vi. § 4. This reverence for sacred

Beggars were ranged in a row along the front of the church, and they found in St. Chrysostom an earnest pleader of their cause. He considered that the immediate presence of poverty and disease taught important lessons to the prosperous and healthy. "But they do not sit here only on that account," he added, "but that they may also make you compassionate, that you may be inclined to pity, that you may admire the loving-kindness of God; for if God is not ashamed of them, but has set them in His vestibules, much less do you be ashamed; that you may not be high-minded on account of palaces on earth. Be not then ashamed when called upon by a poor man, and if he should catch your knees do not shake him off."⁸

We are somewhat at a loss to say whether or not the inhabitants of Antioch and Constanti-

places was common at that period to all pious persons. Gregory of Nazianzen relates of his devout mother, Nonna, that "in her the religious feeling conquered all others; the concerns of salvation relating to mankind moved her heart more deeply than anything personal. She appeared in church with reverential devotion. This feeling of reverence was impressed on her outward appearance, so that she never ventured to expectorate in the church, nor to turn her back to the altar."—Neander's *Memorials of Christian Life*, part ii. chap. 2.

⁸ In 1 *Thess. Homil.* xi. § 3; In 1 *Cor. Homil.* xxx. § 3; *Homil. de verbis, Habentes eundem Spiritum.* §c. iii. § 11.

nople were generally regular attendants at church, for we have so many different allusions to the subject. There was as much running after popular preachers as there is at the present time, perhaps more; and where a bishop or priest had once obtained a reputation for eloquence his congregation was overflowing. St. Chrysostom was astonished and delighted to see not only the unemployed, but soldiers and mechanics, who were much engaged with the duties of the camp and workshop, flocking to hear his series of sermons on repentance.⁹ In allusion to a passage of Isaiah he called such a congregation the cloak of his church,¹ and proceeded thus:—"As an honourable and discreet matron looks tidier and more elegant when her dress descends to her ankles, so also the church is the more charming to-day, and wears a long garment, since it is covered by numbers of your persons. No part can be seen naked to-day as it could be seen on previous days. But they who have only come to-day, and do not always clothe their mother, were the cause of that nakedness. And remember that the peril is serious, if you have your mother

⁹ *De Pœnitentiâ Homil.* iii. § 1.

¹ "Thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament."—*Isa.* xlix. 18.

naked.”² What he lamented especially was, that a thin congregation has such a chilling effect upon the few who compose it.³ The church is like a large banqueting-room, when the host’s invitations have been for the most part declined, and only a few guests are seated at his board; but where the guests are numerous the cheerfulness and conviviality of the meeting are increased.⁴ Christians, then, should endeavour to light their souls at the flame which glowed in the martyr’s breasts, and which so warmed them that they gave up all for their religion; or, at least, Christians should take as much interest in their religious duties, as men of the world do in secular business and the pursuit of wealth. As it was, a little mud upon the road or a shower was sufficient to prevent their attendance at church;⁵ and even if they came themselves they seemed to think that it was unnecessary to bring their sons.⁶ They ought to have been shamed into better conduct by the Jews, who were most punctual in their observance of the Sabbath and attendance at the synagogues.⁷ Such of his

² *De Sanctâ Pentecoste Homil. i. § 1.*

³ *Contra Anomæos Homil. xi. § 4.*

⁴ *De Verbis, Habentes eundem Spiritum, &c., Homil. i. § 2.*

⁵ *Quod frequenter conveniendum sit, Homil. § 1.*

⁶ *Contra Anomæos Homil. xi. § 4.*

⁷ *In illud, Si esurierit inimicus tuus, Homil. § 3.*

flock as set a good example to the rest were thus complimented by the Preacher:—"The heat is intense, the dryness of the air is oppressive, but it has not relaxed your eagerness nor parched up your desire of hearing. This is the case with a hearer who is fervent, and whose attention is aroused; he is nerved by the love of hearing to bear all things cheerfully, so long as he can indulge his beautiful and spiritual desire. Neither cold nor heat, nor press of business, nor a multitude of cares, nor other such matters can supplant his desire. Just as, on the other hand, neither an equable temperature, nor leisure, nor ease of mind, nor facility of access, nor a wish for recreation can arouse the supine man and lounge. Not, indeed, that you are such, for you are better than the rest who inhabit our city."^s

When we would ascertain the occasions on which people frequented churches, we become satisfied that there was not an observance of Sunday to the exclusion of other festivals. We have not many references to the Lord's Day, but such as we have prove, that although the Church directed that it should be kept holy, it was too often entirely neglected,

^s *De Futuræ vitæ Delictis Homil.* § 1.

or passed in idleness and dissipation. St. Chrysostom denied that under the Gospel dispensation God had only hallowed the seventh day; He hallowed all days, "but from the beginning God figuratively delivers to us a doctrine, teaching us to offer one entire day in the weekly circle, and to set it apart for spiritual offices."⁹ He also insists that on this day there should be a cessation from labour, that only works of mercy should be done, that thus, and not by convivial meetings, Christ's victory over the grave should be celebrated as a festival.¹ The Sabbath, or Saturday, was also still held sacred in the Eastern Church, but its observance is rarely alluded to by Chrysostom.²

Previous to the year 376, the great festival of our Lord's Nativity had never been observed at Antioch on the twenty-fifth of December, and ten years later the observance of it at that date was still objected to by some as a novelty

⁹ *In Genes. Homil. x. § 7.*

¹ *De Eleemosynâ Homil. § 3.* The Greeks seem to have always observed the Lord's Day rather more strictly than the Latins. Thus in the *Liber Pœnitentialis* of Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, § 38, and in the 51st of the Canons of St. Gregory, we are told that the Greeks would not write, and that they imposed penalties upon such as laboured on that day.

² *In 1 Tim. Homil. v. § 3.*

introduced from the West. The Eastern Church had been accustomed to commemorate the Nativity and Epiphany together on the sixth of January, although according to St. Chrysostom the custom which we follow to this day had always obtained in the West.³ However the Western mode of observance soon became popular in the East also, so that even artisans showed their regard for it by crowding the churches. This festival of Christmas was styled by our Author the most venerable and revered, in short the metropolis of all, for from it Epiphany, Easter, Ascension, and Whitsuntide have their origin and foundation. If Christ had not been born in the flesh, he argues, He had not been baptized, which was the occasion of His Epiphany or Theophania; He had not been crucified, which is Pasch; He had not sent down the Spirit, which is Pentecost; so that for us these festivals have their origin in one, like different rivers rising from the same source.⁴

In the above passage it is shown that the festival of Epiphany was designed to commemorate our Lord's Baptism, and in connexion with it a singular custom was observed. Con-

³ *In Diem Natalem D. N. Jesu Christi Homil.*

⁴ *De Beato Philogonio Homil.* § 3; *In Ephes. Homil.* iii. § 4.

sidering that, as on that day, water had been once for all sanctified by Christ, each member of the congregation, who attended the midnight service, would carry home with him from church a small quantity of that element, and keep it for a whole year. We are not told what preparation it had passed through, but certainly it remained pure and untainted for the whole year, and even after two, three, or more years it had been known to be as fresh as on the day when it was drawn from the spring.⁵

The festival of the Ascension was at that time called "The Assumption of Christ,"⁶ or else, "The return of our Lord into heaven,"⁷ and was celebrated on the same day as at present.

All the festivals which we have mentioned were regarded as holidays. Long before their annual return all persons, who could afford it, prepared their fine clothes, purchased fashionable shoes, had a larger and handsomer table than usual laid out; in fact studied in every way to adorn themselves and their houses.⁸ On the

⁵ *De Baptismo Christi Homil.* § 2.

⁶ *In Ascensionem (ἀνάληψιν) Jesu Christi Homil.* This festival was also called Epizomene.

⁷ *De Sanctâ Pentecoste Homil.* ii. § 1.

⁸ *De S. Philogonio contra Anomæos Homil.* vi. § 4.

Eves religious services were held, and sometimes the congregation kept a vigil through the whole night.⁹ On all such great occasions the churches were much frequented, but at other times the case was very different. St. Chrysostom complained that people would come on festivals, but not on other days;¹ much as Clergymen often now complain that their parishioners will only attend on Sundays, and not on other festivals. Some professed Christians were scarcely seen in church once a year.²

Festivals were also celebrated in memory of saints and martyrs, because the world applauded their noble actions, as those of combatants in the amphitheatre who had struggled and triumphed.³ On these solemnities the people assembled at the Martyria, the Emperors setting them an example,⁴ and at such times many of St. Chrysostom's homilies were delivered; indeed he considered that the chief use of festivals was to assemble Christians together for Divine worship.⁵ Each Church thus honoured the

⁹ *Homil. in Martyres*, § 1; *De Terræ Motu Homil.* § 1.

¹ *In illud, Si esurierit inimicus tuus Homil.* §§ 2, 3.

² *In 2 Cor. Homil.* ii. § 6.

³ *In S. Romanum Martyrem Homil.* § 1.

⁴ *De Ascensio. D. N. Jesu Christi Homil.* § 1; *In S. Phocam Martyrem Homil.* § 1.

⁵ *Expos. in Psalm. cxxi.* § 2.

memories of its own martyrs, but as it was found impossible to assign a particular day for all who had adorned the Universal Church, soon after Whit Sunday a general festival was held, to commemorate the whole of the noble army.⁶

Lent was ushered in, to the grief of religious persons, by a carnival of revelling and drunkenness.⁷ When fairly commenced it was observed with great strictness by good Christians, and even the most negligent payed some attention to it, listening at that time especially to the admonitions of their clergy.⁸ Generally all who were well-disposed and had it in their power to do so, either remained quietly in their houses or repaired to church. On one occasion St. Chrysostom said that the whole city looked like a noble, chaste, and sober matron; for rulers and subjects, freemen and slaves, men and women, rich and poor, Greeks and barbarians, all joined in its observance. The Emperor himself obeyed the call. There was no distinction

⁶ *Homil. in SS. Martyres.* This is entitled "Laudatio SS. omnium qui martyrium toto terrarum orbe sunt passi."

⁷ *De Pœnitentiâ Homil. v. § 5.*

⁸ *In eos qui Pascha jejunant; Contra Judæos Homil. iii. § 4.*

between the tables of rich and poor; but all sat down cheerfully to a most frugal meal.⁹

Holy Week or, as it was called, the Great Week, was compared by a metaphor familiar to all readers of St. Paul's Epistles, to the last struggle of racehorses before reaching the winning-post. Prayers were then more fervent, and good works were performed with greater diligence. All official business was suspended, the courts of justice were closed, and usually a pardon of offences was proclaimed.¹ The Saturday before Easter was styled "the great Sabbath," and the night was strictly observed as a vigil by all, but especially by such catechumens as were expecting to receive Baptism on the morrow.²

The object for which the Lenten fast was instituted was, we are told, that men might pass through a course of preparation for Holy Communion at Easter.³ It lasted forty days, during which time all were expected to abstain from flesh meat, so that butchers enjoyed a complete respite from labour; some also abstained from poultry and fish.⁴ Persons in good health

⁹ *In Genes. Homil.* ii. § 1.

¹ *Ibid.* xxx. § 1.

² *Ep. ad Innocentium; In Psalm.* cxlv. § 1.

³ *Contra Judæos Homil.* iii. § 4.

⁴ *Ad Pop. Antioch. Homil.* iii. §§ 4, 5.

were directed to fast all day, and not to take any food until the evening, but all were left at liberty to fast or not according to their strength.⁵ Sabbaths and Lord's Days, that is, Saturdays and Sundays, were exceptions and not considered fasting days, but rather like inns on the high road, stations for refreshment.⁶ All Fridays were observed as fast days, and Holy Communion was then administered in memory of our Lord's Passion.⁷

Such persons as were ever ready to make excuses for not attending church often complained that the terms of Divine Services interfered with their hours of meals. They did not like to attend after they had dined, some pleading that devotional services ought to be engaged in whilst they were fasting, and others finding it extremely inconvenient to come after they had eaten and drunk to satiety.⁸ St. Chrysostom rather urged such persons to come after dinner; for a moderate meal ought not to be any impediment to devotion, and the consideration that they were about to take a part in Divine Service would be a check upon inordinate in-

⁵ *In Genes. Homil.* vi. § 6; vii. § 6; x. § 1.

⁶ *Ibid.* xi. § 2.

⁷ *In 1 Tim. Homil.* v. § 3.

⁸ *In Genes. Homil.* x. § 1.

dulgence at table. He reminded them that our Lord delivered His most memorable discourses after He had fed the multitude, and after His Last Supper. They might have had a plausible excuse, if they had been forbidden to enter the sanctuary after they had breakfasted or dined; as it was they had none.

True it was that no business was done at the law courts after dinner, because men of the world ate and drank to excess, but the archbishop trusted that his hearers only ate and drank to recruit their strength; not so as to deprive them of reason. "The unfit hearer is not the man who has eaten and drunk, but he who gives no heed to what is said, who yawns, whose attention slackens, whose body is here but whose mind is wandering elsewhere; such an one, although he may be fasting, is an unprofitable hearer. On the other hand the man who is earnest and watchful, who keeps his mind in a state of attention will be our most suitable hearer, although he may have eaten and drunk." Chrysostom's arguments prevailed. "I joy and rejoice with you all," he said, "that you have actually put in practice that admonition of ours which we lately made with respect to those who were absent because they were not fasting. For I think that to-day

many who have dined are present, and go to fill up this goodly assemblage. That this is the fact I conjecture from the more brilliant spectacle that I see around me, and the larger conflux of hearers. In which case, beloved, I ask, did you act for the better; at the last meeting, when after your meal you turned to your slumbers; or now, when after a meal you have presented yourselves to hear the divine laws?"⁹

Although great reverence was demanded for the sanctuary, although it was freely rendered by the devout, and certain forms of respect were complied with by all, yet if a comparison were to be drawn between the conduct of the general congregation at that period, and our congregations at present, it would probably result in our favour. Many by assuming the most absurd airs contrived to mark invidiously the distinction between themselves and their humbler brethren. Some pompous gentlemen seemed as if they thought that in coming to church they were doing God a favour.¹ The noise and confusion also were sometimes most disgraceful. "Our assemblies differ in nothing from a public-house," said the preacher; "so

⁹ *Ad Pop. Antioch. Homil. ix. § 1; x. § 1.*

¹ *In Princip. Actorum, Homil. i. § 1.*

loud is the laughter, so great the disturbance; as in baths and markets, the shouting and tumult is universal." The church was a complete bear-garden. He could not speak of his *flock*, for there was not a *sheep* amongst them. The church was like a stable for oxen, asses, and camels; all brought in their filth from the world, and were talking about their business, bargains, or jollities;² some even laughing immoderately.³ In other cities indeed Christians behaved with more decorum, and there was as much decency as is witnessed in a well-ordered English congregation—although even this did not satisfy St. Chrysostom who wished men to approach God's house with reverence and godly fear. "Elsewhere," he said, "it is not permitted even to address one's neighbour in church, not even if one has received back a long-absent friend. These things are done outside, and very properly; for this is no barber's nor perfumer's shop, nor any merchant's warehouse in the market-place, but a place of angels, a place of archangels, a palace of God, Heaven itself."⁴ Possibly some of these rebukes do not

² In *Matt. Homil.* lxxxviii. al. lxxxix. § 4.

³ In *Hebr. Homil.* xv. § 4.

⁴ In *1 Cor. Homil.* xxxvi. §§ 5, 6; In *1 Tim. Homil.* ix. § 1; *De Penitentia Homil.* ix.

refer to the behaviour of the congregation during the actual time of service, but before it commenced and when they were dispersing; still their conduct was bad enough even during the prayers and sermon.⁵

One circumstance was very scandalous. Some adroit thieves took advantage of the eagerness with which persons crowded to hear the eloquent archbishop, and when his admirers' attention was the closest extracted their money from their pockets. The name which was applied to these cunning fellows show that they adopted a method, which of late years has been successfully followed in omnibuses and railway carriages, and probably they could cut out a pocket as skilfully as a swell mobsman.⁶ Included in the light-fingered profession were also women, whose special vocation was at the baths and churches, where they robbed fine ladies of their jewels and golden ornaments.⁷

The fact is, these ladies offered great temptations to cupidity. They seemed to think that

⁵ *In Matt. Homil. vi. § 6.*

⁶ They were called βαλαντιότομοι—*Homil. De Incomprehens. Dei Naturâ, § 6.*

⁷ *De Virginitate Lib. § 61.* So common was purloining at the Baths that in the Pandects there is a special heading "Of the thieves of the Baths." See also many instances in Becker's *Gallus*, Sec. 7.

an attendance at church afforded them a good opportunity of showing how much richer they were than their neighbours; and brought with them such a dazzling display of dress and jewelry that they looked more like actresses than Christian worshippers. Some are mentioned as appearing at church with ornaments of the enormous value of ten thousand talents,⁸ but possibly we are to regard this as merely denoting that their price was inestimable. "What?" asked the pastor, "When you approach God in prayer have you brodered hair and golden ornaments? Are you come to a dance? to a marriage? to a gay procession? There such embroidery, such costly garments had been seasonable; here not one of them is wanted. You came to pray, to supplicate for pardon of your sins, to plead for your offences, beseeching the Lord and hoping to secure His favour. Why do you adorn yourself? This is not the dress of a suppliant. How can you groan? How can you weep? How pray with fervency when thus attired? Should you weep, your tears will be the ridicule of beholders. She that weeps ought not to be wearing gold. This would be but acting and hypocrisy. For

⁸ In *Matt. Homil. lxxxix. al. xc. § 4.*

is it not acting, to pour forth tears from a soul so overgrown with extravagance and pride? Away with such hypocrisy! God is not mocked! This is the attire of actors and dancers who live upon the stage. Nothing of this sort becomes a modest woman, who should be adorned 'with shamefastness and sobriety.'"⁹

This passage leads us to infer that there was often a greater display of devotion at church than at present, and that it was not uncommon to shed tears at the penitential parts of the service. It cannot fail also to remind many how much out of place, how supremely ridiculous it is for persons—who seem to attend church with a view to display their finery—to join in the words of our Common Prayer, to speak of themselves as "miserable sinners," to tell how God regarded "the lowliness of His handmaiden," to pray for deliverance from "pride, vainglory and hypocrisy," on the ground that God "despiseth not the sighing of a contrite heart, nor the desire of such as be sorrowful."

I trust that I may be permitted to quote one more passage to the same purport:—"Has a

⁹ In 1 Tim. Homil. viii. § 1.

rich man entered here, or even a rich woman? She does not regard how she shall hear the oracles of God, but how she shall make a show, how she shall sit in pomp, how with much glory, how she shall surpass all other women in the costliness of her garments, and render herself more dignified by her dress, and look and gait. All her care and concern is, Did such a woman see me? Did she admire me? Is my beauty handsomely set off? In like manner also the rich man enters, meaning to exhibit himself to the poor man, and to strike him with awe by the garments which are about him, and by the number of his slaves. And they stand round, driving off the crowd. But he from his great pride does not condescend even to do this, but considers it a work so unworthy of a gentleman that, although excessively puffed up, he cannot bear to do it, but commits it to his attendant slaves."¹

Sometimes ladies had a worse reason for adorning themselves than the mere indulgence of vanity.

¹ In 2 *Thess. Homil. iii. § 3.*

CHAPTER III.

DIVINE SERVICES.

Times.—Arrangements.—United worship.—Scripture lessons.—Sermon.—Liturgy.—Dismissal of non-communicants.—Kiss of peace.—Prayers and Hymns.—Administration of bread and wine.—Posture.—Office of Deacons.—Minor arrangements.—How often persons communicated.—Excommunication.—Baptism.—Litanies.—Funerals.—Individual piety.—Family and private devotions.

BEFORE we enter upon the description of Public Worship, as gathered from the writings of St. Chrysostom, it is necessary to remind the reader that we are setting forth a picture of the Greek Church at the close of the fourth century. It is obvious that there had by this time been a great departure from the simplicity of primitive worship. This had partly arisen from the employment of wealth and art in the service of a religion which, from being persecuted, had become dominant. Customs had also crept in from pagan sources; and there were marks of a reaction in the direction of Judaic modes of thought. Usages, too, harmless in themselves, but which were after-

wards found to engender superstition, and were therefore laid aside by the wisdom of our Reformers, are found here in their infancy.¹ The admirable chapter "On Ceremonies," in the Preface to our Book of Common Prayer, will be sufficient to guard us against any desire to re-introduce practices which have been by our own Church deliberately abandoned. It is, however,

¹ Compare the following passages taken from "The Right Use of the Early Fathers," by the Rev. J. J. Blunt, late Margaret Professor of Divinity.

"In the writings of Clemens (Romanus) may be detected the germ of several customs or opinions which eventually became corrupt as exercised in the Romish Church; but which, as presented to us in him, are generally little more than unauthorized, yet still serve to intimate to us the use from which the abuse proceeded."—P. 102.

"With respect to Tertullian, we should find in him several traces of the future characteristics of the Church of Rome, mostly the unauthorized beginnings of customs or sentiments, which grew up to a vicious excess, and the eventual mischief of which could not be then foreseen."—P. 103.

"It is true that in Cyprian, as we have found was the fact with other of the Fathers before him, the germ or rudiment of several opinions and practices, which eventually became abuses of the Church of Rome, are to be discovered. But it is the germ or rudiment only, and it must be ever remembered in how different a light we see these faint beginnings, after the abuse has become inveterate and notorious, from that in which they would be regarded whilst they were yet initiative only, and where no such evil consequence could have been anticipated."—P. 149.

not only interesting but instructive, to study the customs of an age in which they were beginning to prevail, and to observe how St. Chrysostom, taking such things as he found them, raises a warning voice against superstition and formality, which had yet to develop themselves more fully and more lamentably, until by a great effort the nobler spirits of a later age threw off a burden which had become too heavy to bear.

The whole of Divine Service did not occupy more than two hours.² Morning and evening prayers were offered even in villages twice every day;³ in some churches three times a day.⁴ Regular nightly prayers were established by St. Chrysostom to the great annoyance of such of his clergy as were indisposed to leave their beds. In particular he commended the widows and virgins who complied with this custom, and frequented church both night and day.⁵

The service was regulated according to certain rubrics or ecclesiastical regulations, which were called *laws*. It was divided into two parts;

² *In Princip. Actorum Homil.* l. § 2; *De Baptismo Christi Homil.* § 1.

³ *In illud, Vidi Dominum, &c., Homil.* iv. § 1; *In 1 Tim. Homil.* vi. § 1; *Adv. Judæos. Homil.* iii. § 4.

⁴ *De Annâ Sermo* iv. § 5.

⁵ *In 1 Cor. Homil.* xxx. § 4; see *Socr. Hist. Ecc.* lib. vi. cap. 7.

the first was styled "the prayers of the catechumens," and comprised such as catechumens and the uninitiated were permitted to join in; the second part was styled "the prayers of the faithful," and was designed only for the initiated.⁶

Service commenced when the Bishop uttered the salutation of peace.⁷ The congregation then stretched forth their hands in token that they offered to God those members which are so often "instruments of unrighteousness."⁸ Sometimes individuals made use of frantic gestures, but St. Chrysostom endeavoured to put an end to this practice.⁹

It is clear that the idea of a clergyman conducting the whole of Divine Service, either by himself or with a clerk, was never contemplated. The people made responses, and said "Amen" at the conclusion of each prayer.¹⁰ The Lord's Prayer was offered by the whole congregation; so was the sixty-third Psalm—according to our arrangement of the Psalms—beginning with the words, "O God, Thou art my God, early will I seek Thee," and the hundred and forty-first.

⁶ *In 2 Cor. Homil. ii. § 5.*

⁷ *In 1 Cor. Homil. xxxvi. § 5.*

⁸ *Expos. in Psalm. cxi. § 3.*

⁹ *In Matt. Homil. xix. § 3; In illud, Vidi Dominum Homil. i. § 4.*

¹⁰ *In 1 Cor. Homil. xxxv. § 3; In 2 Cor. Homil. ii. § 8.*

The former was appointed to be said or sung every morning, the latter every evening.¹ The *Benedicite*, or Song of the Three Children, was also sung in all parts of the world.²

We have reason to conclude that there was a regular arrangement of Scripture lessons for every day throughout the year.³ Both a prophet and an apostle were read.⁴ Between Easter and Pentecost the Acts of the Apostles were read; on Good Friday special chapters relating to the cross; on the Great Sabbath the history of our Lord's betrayal, crucifixion, death and burial; on Easter Day an account of His Resurrection.⁵ Throughout Lent the book of Genesis was read.⁶ It was the special duty of a minister called the Reader to read the lessons. First the deacon enjoined silence, then the reader from a raised place declared who was the author of the sacred book which was appropriated to that day, and whether it was this or that prophet, apostle, or evangelist. He would thus show whose words they were which he was about to read,

¹ *Expos. in Psalm. cxl.* § 1.

² *Quod Nemo laeditur nisi a seipso Lib.* § 16.

³ *Ad Pop. Antioch. Homil. ii.* § 4.

⁴ *In Rom. Homil. xxiv.* § 3.

⁵ *Cur in Pentecoste Acta legantur Homil.* §§ 3, 5.

⁶ *In Genes. Homil. xxxiii.* § 1; *Ad Pop. Antioch. Homil. vii.* § 1.

and state on what account they were written. He then commenced with the usual formula, "Thus saith the Lord."⁷ Before the sermon a portion of the Gospel was read.⁸

The sermon or homily was delivered before the Eucharistic prayers commenced. "We need both counsel and prayer," we are told. "For this reason we first give you counsel, and then offer prayers for you. And this the initiated know."⁹ All classes of persons were admitted to hear sermons, and even heretics were amongst St. Chrysostom's auditors.¹ The preacher commenced with the words, "Peace be to all."²

A singular custom was observed with regard to those who were possessed, or whose intellects were disordered. Before the celebration of the Eucharist they were conducted by a Deacon towards the altar, and there they bowed. The intention was that all might be reminded to pray for them, and implore the Divine mercy on their behalf. Accordingly the first prayer

⁷ *In Hebr. Homil. viii. § 4; In 2 Thess. Homil. iii. § 4.*

⁸ *In Joan. Homil. xi. al. x. § 1.*

⁹ *In 1 Thess. Homil. xi. § 2; De Incomprehens. Dei Nat. Homil. iii. § 7.*

¹ *In S. Pelagium Homil. i. § 4; In S. Phocam Homil. § 2; In illud, Pater, si possibile est, Homil. § 1.*

² *In Coloss. Homil. iii. § 3; ix. § 2.*

was for them, and the second for penitents.³

I shall now throw together such scraps of information about the Liturgy as I have collected. St. Chrysostom considered that this word "liturgy," or sacred ministration, might be applied to any Divine Service. He himself applies it to the office of preaching and the work of conversion, which he also calls a *sacrifice*.⁴ But the term is ordinarily applied to the Communion Service, and I now use it in that sense.

St. Chrysostom must have used different liturgies at different stages of his ministry. When a presbyter of Antioch he had that which is styled the liturgy of St. James, but at Constantinople he found St. Basil's. Whether he himself introduced alterations is not clear; but certainly a liturgy is extant at the present time which bears his name. Saville, Montfaucon, Hales, and other learned men have decided that it could not be his compilation, and therefore I do not refer to it as a work of authority. All these liturgies were but varieties of what Mr. Palmer calls the Great Oriental Liturgy.⁵ A liturgy also called the Pasch was

³ *In Matt. Homil.* lxxi. al. lxxii. § 4.

⁴ *In Rom. Homil.* xxix. § 1.

⁵ Palmer's *Origines Liturgicæ*, Introduction and first three sections.

offered three or four times in the week at Constantinople; but we are not admitted to any of its details.⁶

The holy mysteries were celebrated with closed doors. Previous to the commencement the uninitiated were directed to leave the church,⁷ but contrary to regulations some were in the habit of remaining as spectators.⁸ Before any departed the Priest said, "Lift up your hearts;" all replied, "We lift them up unto the Lord." All who remained were presumed to have fasted,¹ and none ventured, however pressing the necessity, to approach the altar with unwashed hands. All such ceremonies, however, St. Chrysostom styled "trifling and unprofitable." "Tell me," said he, "would you choose to come to the sacrifice with unwashed hands? No, I suppose not. But you would rather choose not to come at all, than come with soiled hands. And scrupulous as you are in this trifle, do you come with a soiled soul, and thus dare to touch it?"²

No notice was taken of any distinction of

⁶ *Expos. in Psalm. cxxi.* § 2.

⁷ *In Matt. Homil. xxiii. al. xxiv.* § 3.

⁸ *In Ephes. Homil. iii.* § 5.

⁹ *De Pœnitentiâ Homil. ix.*

¹ *In 1 Cor. Homil. xxvii.* § 5.

² *In Ephes. Homil. iii.* § 4.

ranks in communicants. The emperor approached the altar at the same time as the beggar, and a lady of fashion with a man who was covered with filth and rags.³ Only when all was prepared the Priest rose, and, lifting up his hand, cried out aloud like a herald, whilst an awful silence reigned. Some he invited to approach, but others he prohibited.⁴

At Antioch the communicants used to embrace each other, in order that their prayers for all conditions of men might be offered with unity and mutual love.⁵ Before the oblation they saluted one another with a holy kiss, or the kiss of peace, sometimes styled "the awful embrace,"⁶ which was a symbol of peace, reconciliation, love, and unity.⁷ However there were already symptoms of that abuse, which caused this practice to be discontinued. "Let those give ear," said the preacher, "who kiss obscenely. Hear what things God hath proclaimed by thy mouth, and keep it undefiled."⁸

³ In 1 Thess. Homil. xi. § 4.

⁴ In Hebr. Homil. xvii. § 5; compare In Ephes. Homil. iii. § 4.

⁵ In Joan. Homil. lxxviii. al. lxxvii. § 4.

⁶ De Proditione Judæ Homil. ii. § 6.

⁷ In Joan. Homil. lxxviii. al. lxxvii. § 4; In Ephes. Homil. xiv. § 4.

⁸ In 2 Cor. Homil. xxx. § 2.

A prayer and general thanksgiving were offered at the Eucharist for the whole Catholic Church, for kings and all in authority, for bishops and presbyters, and all absent brethren.⁹ The sentences "The Lord be with you," and "With thy spirit," were said, or rather chanted alternately by priest and people.¹ The hymn "Glory to God in the Highest" was sung, and also the Trisagion, or Seraphic Hymn, beginning "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God."² There was a special invocation of the Holy Spirit upon the elements when the priest stood with extended hands,³ yet the elements were not said to be consecrated by man, but by those words, "This is My body," which Christ uttered once for all, and which the priest repeated.⁴ He also addressed the congregation with the words:—"Holy things for the holy."⁵ At the time of consecration the bread was broken.⁶

Prayers were offered for all who had departed in the faith of Christ, especially for martyrs and

⁹ *In S. Eustathium Homil.* § 3; *In Matt. Homil.* xxv. al. xxvi. § 3; *In 2 Cor. Homil.* ii. § 8.

¹ *In 1 Cor. Homil.* xxxvi. § 4.

² *In Isai. vi. Homil.* vi. § 3; *In Ephes. Homil.* xiv. § 4.

³ *De Cemeterio et De Cruce Homil.* § 3.

⁴ *De Prodit. Judæ Homil.* ii. § 6.

⁵ *In Matt. Homil.* vii. § 6.

⁶ *In 1 Cor. Homil.* xxiv. § 2.

benefactors of the Church; ⁷ but no mention was made of deceased catechumens, or any who died unbaptized. ⁸ These prayers had no reference to Purgatory; on the contrary, the state of the departed is only alluded to as one of repose and bliss. ⁹

The hundred and forty-fifth psalm formed part of the Eucharistic service, and all the congregation joined in chanting it. The design was to refer especially to the words:—"The eyes of all wait upon Thee, and Thou givest them their meat in due season." ¹

Communicants received the consecrated bread and wine into their hands; ² none were prohibited from partaking of the cup. ³ In the following account of the administration of the Lord's Supper, St. Chrysostom begins by demanding, in anticipation, as it were, of priestly exclusiveness, the cup for the laity:—

"There are occasions when there is no difference

⁷ In *Philip. Homil.* iii. § 4; In *Acta Apost. Homil.* xviii. § 5; *xxi.* § 4; *De Sacerdotio*, lib. vi. § 4.

⁸ In *Philip. Homil.* iii. § 4.

⁹ In *Hebr. Homil.* iv. § 5; *De Lazaro Concio* vi. § 2.

¹ In *Psalms* cxliv. § 1.

² *Ad Pop. Antioch. Homil.* xx. § 5.

³ *Ad Illuminandos Catechesis* i. § 1; In *Matt. Homil.* lxxxii. al. lxxxiii. § 2. It is considered essential that wine should be given and received.

at all between the priest and those under him ; for instance, when we are to partake of the awful mysteries ; for we are all alike counted worthy of the same things ; not as under the Old Testament, when the priest ate some things, and those under him others, and it was not lawful for the people to partake of those things whereof the priest partook. But not so now ; for before all one body is set, and one cup. And in the prayers also one may observe the people contributing much. For in behalf of the possessed, in behalf of those under penance, the prayers are made in common both by the priest and by them ; and all say one prayer, that prayer replete with pity. Again, when we have excluded from the holy precincts those who are unable to partake of the holy table, another prayer is to be offered, and we all alike fall upon the ground, and all alike rise up. Again, when we are to receive and give peace, we all alike salute each other. Again, in the mysteries themselves, the priest prays for the people, and the people also pray for the priest ; for the words ' With thy spirit,' are nothing else than this. The offering of thanksgiving again is common ; for neither does he give thanks alone, but also all the people. For having first taken their voices, next when they agree that

‘It is meet and right so to do,’ he begins the thanksgiving. And why do you marvel that the people everywhere rightly join their utterance with the priest, since in truth even with the very Cherubim, and Seraphim above, they send up in common those sacred hymns?”⁴

The holy mysteries were received by communicants, at one time when they were in a standing posture, at another, when they were kneeling. Probably they stood on the Lord’s Day, and the days of Pentecost, but knelt on other occasions.⁵

It was the duty of the deacons, clothed in white tunics, to perambulate the church, to give directions regarding a due observance of required forms, and to see that no person of scandalous life approached the Holy Table.⁶ At one period of the service an allusion not only to the posture of the people’s bodies, but also to the exaltation of their minds, the

⁴ In 2 Cor. Homil. xviii. § 3.

⁵ In 2 Cor. Homil. ii. §§ 5, 8. “The Deacons summoned all to prayers by saying,—‘Let us *stand* and pray;’ and many would ‘stand and talk during the time of the faithful;’” and see Homil. xx. § 3. But on Christmas Day St. Chrysostom said to his hearers when inviting them to Holy Communion,—“Let us *fall down*, and confess our sins.”—Homil. in Diem Natalem Christi, § 7.

⁶ In Matt. Homil. lxxxii. al. lxxxiii. § 6.

deacon cried out, "Let us stand upright."⁷ He also required them to remember the duty of interchanging kindness and goodwill by saying, "Know one another."⁸ He demanded the prayers of the congregation in these words: "Let us pray for the bishop, for old age, for grace—that he may rightly divide the word of truth, for those who are here and everywhere;"⁹ also, "for those who are asleep in Christ, and for those who commemorate them."¹ He frequently repeated the words, "Let us attend,"² and "supplicate the angel of peace."³ If any disturbance should arise in the congregation; if any should be seen talking or laughing it was the deacon's duty to interfere. After the priest had pronounced the blessing, the deacon closed the service by saying, "Depart in peace."⁴

⁷ *De Incomprehens. Dei Naturâ Homil.* iv. § 5.

⁸ *Contra Judæos Homil.* i. § 4.

⁹ *De Prophetiarum Obscuritate Homil.* ii. § 5.

¹ *In Acta Apost. Homil.* xxi. § 4.

² *Ibid.* xix. § 5.

³ *In Ascens. D. N. Jesu Christi Homil.* § 1.

⁴ *In Acta Apost. Homil.* xxiv. § 4. I subjoin an account which St. Gregory Nazianzen gives, under the fiction of a dream, of the church in which St. Chrysostom preached a few years later:—"Sweet sleep embraced me, and in it a dream presented to my mind my Church Anastasia, the object of my daily longing. I was seated, as it appeared to me, on a high-raised chair (the bishop's throne), yet

It was not thought necessary to attend punctually at the commencement of Divine Service, or to wait for its close. St. Chrysostom himself recommends that when the sermon is long the infirm should hear as much as they can digest, and then leave, for no one required them to remain to the end.⁵ Yet he complained when they went out during the Eucharistic Service, and he traced the origin of much confusion in the Church to the permission which they had received to withdraw before the final blessing was pronounced.⁶

Incense was burned in the Churches.⁷ The singing was what we call congregational.⁸ Vocal

not elated in mind, for nothing like arrogance took possession of me during the dream. Somewhat lower, on either side of me, sat the presbyters, the leaders of the flock, the chosen band of men. Next stood, in robes of dazzling whiteness, the attendant helpers (deacons), a picture of angelic adornment. But the people arranged themselves in ranks, clustering like bees around the pulpit and contending for nearer access. Some of them even pressed upon the sacred doors, in order to approach nearer with their ears as well as feet. Others flocked in from the market-towns and highways to hear my discourse; while from the upper range of seats holy virgins and noble ladies bent forward with attentive ears."—Ullman's *Life*, as above, sect. iii. chap. iv.

⁵ *Dæmones non gubernare mundum*, Homil. i. § 1.

⁶ *De Baptismo Christi* Homil. § 4.

⁷ *In Matt. Homil. lxxxviii. al. lxxxix.* § 4.

⁸ *De Studio præsentium* Homil. § 2; *In Matt. Homil. xi.*

music was valued and encouraged. The devout endeavoured to improve and refine it; so that they might by means of psalms and hymns draw away men's thoughts from the songs of convivial parties.⁹ Instrumental music seems not to have been used at all, and it was thought unnecessary for public worship.¹ The worshippers often made the sign of the cross on their foreheads.² Such of the consecrated bread and wine as remained after all had communicated was laid by and reserved.³

The mass of the people attended Holy Communion very irregularly. In St. Chrysostom's church the Eucharist was offered every day;⁴ and generally it was offered at every *synaxis*, or meeting for Divine worship.⁵ It was his hearty desire that each individual should partake of it so often. On Christmas Day he urged his congregation to begin this practice at once, and knowing

§ 3; *In 1 Cor. Homil. xxvi.* § 5. Yet the 15th Canon of the Council of Laodicea forbids any to sing but the canonical singers; but this was contrary to the usage of the Eastern Church.

⁹ *Expos. in Psalm. xli.* §§ 2, 3.

¹ *In Psalm. cxlix.* § 2.

² *In Matt. Homil. liv. al. lv.* §. 4.

³ *Ep. ad Innocentium.* § 2.

⁴ *In Ephes. Homil. iii.* § 4.

⁵ *Adv. Judæos Homil. iii.* § 4; *In 1 Tim. Homil. v.* § 3; *In Matt. Homil. xxv. al. xxvi.* § 3.

that they would hesitate to do so whilst unprepared, he points out, in the true spirit of the Gospel the sort of preparation required, reminding them how sinful it was to turn from their Lord when He came to meet them. He would not have them say that they require a long time for self-examination. "I testify and pledge myself," are his words, "that if any one of us sinners departs from his former sins, and promises God with sincerity that he will not touch them again, he will need no further apology." We require, then, not so much a lengthened preparation as a fixed determination.⁶ If they had such they might communicate with safety every day: for, as he says, "the Lord appointed for the Jews festivals as *annual* memorials of their peculiar blessings; but for you, so to say, He has appointed a *daily* memorial by these mysteries."⁷

One thing is clear—no one considered himself in communion with the Church if he did not occasionally join in the Eucharist; indeed, this was the great mark of distinction between the faithful and unbelievers.⁸ Some joined only once in the year, at Easter or Epiphany; others twice, others only on the festivals of the martyrs, others

⁶ *De S. Philogonio contra Anomæos Homil. vi. §§ 3, 4.*

⁷ *In Matt. Homil. l. ad li. § 3.*

⁸ *Ibid. iv. § 7.*

very frequently;⁹ but many came only because it was the custom, and it was necessary to remind such that they ought to withdraw. St. Chrysostom even complained that many of those who seemed to be really in earnest were in all the bitterness of sectarianism, and that they were doing injury to the body of Christ. "Buffet me, women," he said to such female heresiarchs, "spit upon me when you meet me in the street, and aim blows at me; but do not wreak your revenge upon Christ; do not kick against the pricks; do not rend His Church; let that be at unity."¹

The good archbishop, as was stated, insisted on no more preparation for Holy Communion than is demanded in the Bible, yet he was very anxious that no one should come without a pure conscience and a resolution to forsake his sins, that all should be very reverent and devout in their behaviour, not crowding to the altar and treading upon one another's heels; but that they should draw near with fear and trembling, remembering that they were verily about to receive into their hearts the body and blood of Christ; and to approach Him before Whom the Cheru-

⁹ *In 1 Tim. Homil. vi. § 3.*

¹ *In Ephes. Homil. iii. §§ 4, 5; De Baptismo Christi Homil. § 4.*

him veil their faces, and cry, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God.²

The Church always reserved to herself the right of visiting offenders with rebukes and censures. By faithful and high-minded bishops this authority was employed for the reformation of transgressors whether of high or low degree, as witness St. Babylas and the Emperor Decius, St. Ambrose and the Emperor Theodosius, St. Chrysostom and the Empress Eudoxia.³ Chrysostom thus addressed his clergy on this point:—"Yours will be no light punishment if, when you are conscious that any one has committed sin, you consent that he partake of this table. His blood will be required at your hands. Even if he should be a general or a prefect; even if he who wears the diadem should come unworthily, forbid him. You have greater authority than he has." Nor was he himself the man to flinch from the responsibility which he urged others to take. "Fear God," said he, "not man; but if you are afraid of man you will be laughed to scorn by him; but if you fear God, you will be even respected by men. But if you dare not do

² *In Diem Natalem D. N. Jesu Christi Homil.* § 7; *De Cemeterio et Cruce Homil.* § 3; *In 2 Tim. Homil.* vi. § 4; *In Hebr. Homil.* xvii. § 4.

Homil. in S. Babylam.

it yourself, bring him to me; I will not consent to his audacity. I will rather lose my life than impart the blood of the Lord unworthily, and I will shed my own blood rather than impart this awful blood improperly."⁴ His whole life showed that this was no empty boast.

The Agapæ or love-feasts which had been customarily held in Antioch after the administration of Holy Communion had, in St. Chrysostom's time, fallen into disuse.⁵

There was no more interesting service in the early Church than the baptismal. The rite of Baptism was usually celebrated at Easter; but Chrysostom did not wish to see it deferred to that season if the candidates were duly prepared some time previous.⁶ Thirty days were occupied in their preparation. They then came with their feet bare, and after they had put off their ordinary dress they were clothed in a single tunic, and not stripped naked, as Bingham relates.⁷ Before the rite was administered, each one said:—"I renounce thee, O Satan, thy pomp and worship; and I am joined to Thee, O Christ."⁸ He also added:—"I believe in the resurrec-

⁴ *In Matt. Homil. lxxxii. al. lxxxiii. § 6.*

⁵ *In Dictum, Oportet et hæreses esse, &c., Homil. § 3.*

⁶ *In Acta Apost. Homil. i. § 8.*

⁷ *Catechesis i. § 2; Ad Innocent. Ep.*

⁸ *Catechesis ii. § 4; In Colos. Homil. vi. § 4.*

tion of the dead.”⁹ Their whole persons were immersed three times,¹ and were anointed in token that they were about to enter upon a combat.² Men were baptized in one place, and women in another.³

When first admitted to Holy Communion, the newly-baptized used for the first time in prayer the words, “Whereby we cry, Abba, Father,” and entered into a solemn engagement with the priest that they would renounce Satan and his angels, and never turn back to them.⁴ At such times a most impressive prayer, which we have in detached passages, was offered for all catechumens.⁵

Many persons, whom St. Chrysostom severely censured, deferred their baptism until the day of their death, that they might not incur the guilt of sin after baptism.⁶

Processional litanies were offered on occasion of any public calamities. Thus, when before

⁹ *In 1 Cor. Homil. xi. § 1.*

¹ *Ibid. xl. § 1.*

² *In Colos. Homil. vi. § 4.*

³ *Ep. ad Innocent.* An explanation is given in the *Catechesis ad Illuminandos*, i. § 2.

⁴ *In Rom. Homil. xiv. §§ 2, 3; In Joan. Homil. i. § 4.*

⁵ *In 2 Cor. Homil. ii.*

⁶ *Catechesis i. § 1; In Joan. Homil. xviii. al. xvii. § 1.*

Easter there were alarming floods, which were doing incalculable injury to the crops and threatening the whole country with devastation, the population of the city rushed like a torrent to the Church of the Apostles, and implored the advocacy of the Saints Peter and Andrew, Paul and Timothy.'

At funerals various rites, some edifying, but others highly objectionable, were observed. Although intramural burials had been once permitted, they had, with one exception, been at length abolished and strictly forbidden.⁷ The exceptions were peculiar to Constantinople, where the Emperors were buried, not within, but under the porch of the Church of the Holy Apostles, so that it was commonly said, Emperors had become porters to fishermen.⁸ St. Chrysostom did not consider that the new custom of extramural interment arose from any sanatory considerations; at all events, he gave his hearers a religious reason for it, and declared that it was introduced in memory of the cross,

⁷ *Contra Ludos et Theatra Homil.* § 1; *Sermo antequam iret in exsilium.*

⁸ *In Matt. Homil.* lxxiii. al. lxxiv. § 8; *Expos. in Psalm.* v. § 5.

⁹ *Contra Judæos et Gentiles Homil.* § 9; *In 2 Cor. Homil.* xxvi. § 5.

and because Jesus Christ suffered without the gate of Jerusalem.¹

We have several descriptions of the arrangements made for the disposal of the dead. On friends and relations devolved the melancholy duty of closing their eyes. A parting kiss was then given, and the mouth of the mourner pressed to the mouth of the dying man, in imitation of the ancient custom, according to which it was supposed that the survivor thus caught the departing spirit.² Immediately the breath had left the body outcries were raised by regular performers hired for the purpose. The corpse was laid upon a bier, or sometimes on a golden couch—"a fine table," said St. Chrysostom, "to lay before worms."³ The funeral procession had generally to traverse a considerable space, for the cemeteries were at a distance. Not only men-servants and maid-servants, but horses also, led by grooms, were clothed in black sackcloth. Some attendants carried blazing torches, which were emblematic of joy and

¹ *In Cemet. Apellationem Homil.* § 1; compare *Hebr.* xiii. 11, 12.

² *In Philip. Homil.* viii. § 3. Compare *Æneid*, iv. 684—
"Extremus siquis super halitus errat,
Ore legam."

³ *Ad Pop. Antioch. Homil.* iii. § 4; *In 2 Cor. Homil.* xxiii. § 5; *De S. Droside Martyre Homil.* § 6.

triumph.⁴ To St. Chrysostom's great annoyance, hired mourners joined the procession, and howled more like bacchanals than persons in grief. Women rent their clothes, tore their hair, bared their breasts, and lacerated their arms and faces.

The sepulchres were sometimes mausolea of greater magnificence than the houses of the living.⁵ When the funeral party had reached the cemetery they raised a lugubrious chant, or select psalms and hymns were sung by presbyters and choristers. In particular they sang the twenty-third, thirty-second, and hundred and sixteenth psalms, with especial reference to such words as "Though I walk through the valley of death I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me;" "Thou art a place to hide me in; Thou shalt preserve me from trouble;" "Turn again, then, unto thy rest; for the Lord hath rewarded thee."⁶

If the deceased was a stranger, and none of his relations lived near, the neighbours although

⁴ *In Hebr. Homil.* iv. § 5. At Rome white had latterly become the colour of mourning garments for women; but the Greeks always used black.

⁵ *Expos. in Psalm.* xlviii. § 6.

⁶ *De Consolatione Mortis Sermo* ii. § 6; *De Lazaro Concio* v. § 2; *De S. S. Bernice et Prosdoce Homil.* § 3; *In 1 Cor. Homil.* xii. § 7.

poor would still consider it their duty to club together and bury the body as decorously as possible; for they thought it a serious evil that there should be no funereal pomp and display of grief. They called it "dying the death of a dog."⁷

Many of the hired mourners were heathen, and on that account Chrysostom protested strongly against their employment; in truth, he disliked all public display of sorrow. "Let those mourners, he said, stay at home and bewail their sins, not feign sorrow for the departed. They might rest assured that he would never admit such people into the Church."⁸

Although he spoke thus, yet he had a tender heart; and the following passage shows that he could fully enter into the feelings of those whose sorrow he would dispel by Christian arguments:—"You who expect a resurrection, on what account do you lament? Lamentation is the part of those who have no hope. Hear this,

⁷ *De S. Droside Martyre Homil.* § 6. Performance of funeral rites had always been recognized by the Greeks as a duty. Hence they were called τὰ δίκαια, νόμιμα, νομιζόμενα and τὰ προσήκοντα. But still more importance was attached to them by Christians; and, as is well known, one of the causes which Julian assigned for the spread of Christianity was the careful provision made for burying the dead.

⁸ *In Philip. Homil.* iii. § 4.

ye women, as many of you as are fond of wailing—as many as at times of mourning take sorrow so impatiently that you act the part of heathens. But if to grieve for the departed is the part of heathens, then tell me whose part it is to beat oneself and tear the cheeks? On what account do you lament, if you believe that he will rise again, that he has not perished, that it is but a slumber and a sleep? You say, On account of his society, his protection, his care of our affairs, and all his other services. When, therefore, you lose a child at an untimely age, who is not yet able to do anything, on what account do you lament? Why do you seek to recall him? He was displaying, you say, good hopes, and I was expecting that he would be my supporter. On this account, I miss my husband; on this account, my son. For this I wail and lament: not disbelieving the Resurrection, but being left destitute of support, and having lost my protector, my companion, who shared with me in all things—my comforter. On this account I mourn. I know that he will rise again, but I cannot bear the intermediate separation. A multitude of troubles rush in upon me.” With beautiful and affectionate arguments he then shows that God takes away our dearest friends that we may not be bound to

them and withdraw our hopes from Him. He wills that we should love Him above all things; and He wills this only because He loves *us* exceedingly, and, like one who loves to distraction, He can endure no rivals.⁹

It is not our province to exhibit the devotional character of St. Chrysostom's works, except when they throw light upon the inner life of his cotemporaries. From the habit of searching his own heart, he had gained a power of searching other hearts. He was a mirror which displayed men to themselves, and thus enabled them to correct the defects of which they would otherwise have remained unconscious. In this capacity he showed in the first place that the humility which assumes a profession of self-abasement, but in reality is joined with spiritual pride, was not uncommon in his day. He had evidently met with individuals like the lady who told her minister that she was a great sinner, but was exceedingly angry when her confession was believed. He therefore said, "Let us say like the publican, Be merciful to me a sinner; but let us not be indignant if another should say the same of us. For though we say ten thousand vile things of ourselves, yet are affronted when we hear them from

⁹ *In 1 Thess. Homil. vi. § 2.*

others, this is not humility, nor confession, but display and vainglory. Is it display," he replies, "for a man to call himself a sinner? Yes, for we assume the appearance of humility, we are admired, we are praised. If we say the contrary of ourselves, we are despised. We do this then for the sake of our reputation. But what is humility? To acknowledge our fault when another man *reviles* us, to endure calumnies, not even would this be humility, but only ingenuousness. Now however we call ourselves sinners, unworthy, and a thousand other such things; but if any other person should say the same of us we are offended and savage. Do you not see that there is neither confession nor ingenuousness?"¹

An evil which resulted from the growing spirit of monasticism was that men of the world, seeing such an appearance of transcendental piety amongst monks, considered religion impracticable for themselves, and gave up as desperate all attempts at reaching a high standard of morality. It is almost needless to say that Chrysostom only mentions such an error to refute it. "You deceive yourself," he said, "if you think that one thing is required of a man of the world, and another of a monk; the difference

¹ In *Hebr. Homil.* xxvii. § 5.

between them is, that one marries and the other does not. In all other respects they have to render the same account.”²

We regret that we find no clue to the discovery of any form of family devotion, but the practice is strongly recommended. The master of a house is taught by a beautiful simile to imitate the parent bird. “What you hear that is useful carry home in your mouth, like the swallow, and put it in the mouths of the mother and children.”³ Servants also should obtain religious instruction from their masters.⁴ “Let us write it as an unalterable law for ourselves, our wives and children, that we give up this one day of the week entire to hearing, and to the recollection of the things we have heard, for thus we shall come more teachably to the words which are afterwards to be uttered.”⁵ Grace before and after meals is also recommended. The table ought not to be touched before we have offered thanks to Him who gives us food; and if we retire from table to bed without prayer, we are more brutal than the very brutes.⁶

² *Adv. Oppugn. Vitæ Monast.* lib. iii. § 14.

³ *In 2 Thess. Homil.* v. § 5.

⁴ *In Ephes. Homil.* xxii. § ii.

⁵ *In Matt. Homil.* v. § 1.

⁶ *Ibid.* xlix. al. i. § 2; *De Lazaro Concio* i. § 9; *De Aunâ Sermo.* ii. § 5.

The private devotion offered by the pious of that day was not of that perfunctory kind which probably satisfies most people. St. Chrysostom urged his hearers to rise from their beds, and offer up prayers during the stillness of night.⁷ Both by day and night the churches were resorted to for private prayer, but the sketch which is given us of the supplicants is not very engaging. "I said yesterday," we read, "that there are many who pray carelessly, yawning, stretching themselves, continually turning here and there, thus trifling in every way when engaged in prayer. But to-day I have discovered that a much more pernicious evil than that interferes with prayer. For many prostrate themselves, beat the earth with their forehead, pour forth scalding tears, groan bitterly from the bottom of their hearts, stretch out their hands, and manifest great fervour, yet turn this ardour and eagerness against their own salvation." He then declares that they were engaged in praying against their enemies.⁸

Although he always encouraged private devotion in churches when offered heartily and sincerely, he stoutly combated the idea that only such places were appropriate for prayer.

⁷ *In Hebr. Homil.* xiv. § 4; *Expos. in Psalm.* cxxxiii.

⁸ *In Psalm.* cxl. § 2; *In Matt. Homil.* xix. al. xx. § 8.

There was a tendency to exclude religion from secular and domestic life; therefore he said, "When Christ came He purified the whole world. For this reason Paul exhorts us to pray everywhere with boldness and also without doubting. Mark how the world has been purified. As regards the place, we may everywhere lift up holy hands; for the whole earth has become consecrated, more consecrated than the Holy of holies."⁹ If a lawyer should ask how he could leave court and attend church three times in a day, the Preacher would reply, "It is possible and very easy; for, if you cannot easily repair to church, you may at least pray before the door, and that even though you may be tied to the courts of justice; for it needs not so much the voice, as the disposition of heart; not so much outstretched hands as a devotional soul; not so much this or that posture, as the mind. Wherever you are you may raise an altar by simply cherishing a devout and serious temper. Place and time are no hindrance. Though you bow not the knee; though you beat not the breast; though you stretch not your hands to heaven, but only manifest a warm heart, you have all that belongs to prayer. The wife, while she holds in her lap the spindle

⁹ *De Cruce et Latrone, Homil. § 1.*

and spins, can with her soul look up to heaven, and call with fervency on the name of the Lord. It is possible for this man to offer a fervent prayer, while he is on his way alone to the market; for that other to lift up his soul to God, when he sits in his shop and sews leather; and the servant who makes purchases, goes errands, or sits in the kitchen, has nothing to hinder him from doing the same thing.”¹

The archbishop knew that his hearers, like most Christians, felt a difficulty in giving proper utterance to the desires of their hearts, and therefore he instructed them how a devout acquaintance of his was in the habit of expressing himself. The passage is curious as admitting us to the closet devotions of a religious man. He used to pray thus:—“We thank Thee for all Thy benefits shown from the first unto the present day towards Thy unworthy creatures; for such as we know, and for such as we know not; for such as are manifest, and such as are not manifest; for such as are vouchsafed in deed and in word; such as are done with our consent, and without our consent; for all things which have been done for us unworthy creatures, for afflictions, for recreations, for chastisement, for the kingdom of heaven. We beseech Thee to keep

¹ *De Aunâ Sermo iv. § 6.*

our soul holy, that we may have a pure conscience, and an end worthy of Thy loving-kindness. Thou Who hast so loved us as to give Thine only-begotten Son for us, grant us to be worthy of Thy love; grant us, O only-begotten Christ, wisdom in Thy word and in Thy fear; inspire us with the strength that is from Thee. Thou Who gavest the Only-begotten for us, and sentest forth Thy Holy Spirit for the remission of our sins, if we have sinned wilfully or unconsciously pardon us, and impute it not to us. Remember all who call upon Thy name in truth; remember all who wish us well or ill. For we are all men." He then added the prayer of the faithful, as the Lord's Prayer was called. It is to be observed that he purposely prayed with the personal pronoun in the plural, as his object was to offer thanks for common benefits, and to feel united with all Christians.²

The Lord's Prayer, we may remark, was used in all Divine Services. It was offered at Baptism immediately after the newly baptized ascended from the water,³ at the Holy Eucharist,⁴ and in private devotions.⁵

² In *Coloss. Homil.* x. § 3.

³ *Ibid.* vi. § 4.

⁴ In *Genes. Homil.* xxvii. § 8; In *Eutrop. Homil.* § 5.

⁵ *Expos. in Psalm.* cxii. § 1.

CHAPTER IV.

DEVELOPMENT OF TRUTH AND ERROR.

State of the Church.—Doctrines.—Baptismal grace.—The Real Presence.—Confession.—Invocation of Saints.—Adoration of relics.—Images.—Sign of the Cross.—Miracles.—Pilgrimages.—Grace and Free Will.—*Disciplina Arcani*.—Monasticism.—Virginity.—Asceticism.—The Bishop of Rome.

THE Church being a Divine institution, delivered over in a manner to human keeping, it follows that it must have been perfect when it came from its Author; but from that precise moment there must have been a tendency towards imperfection. Its history, therefore, is a record of dilapidation and corruption, which have only been prevented from ending in ruin by timely repair and reformation. It certainly cannot adopt the Carthusian motto, "Never reformed, because never deformed."

These disturbances in the Church, if we may so call them, are intimately connected with the

progress which is essential to society. Civilized men must ever be passing through some change. No power on earth can hand down the features of one age, unaltered, to another. And as circumstances thus alter there is an absolute necessity for corresponding adaptations of religion. Hence, in every communion which has ever existed, whether Catholic or Sectarian, Roman Catholic or Protestant, there have been a series of developments, some for good, others for evil.

We shall find, of course, that there were many such in St. Chrysostom's age, and my object is to exhibit them with accuracy, so that we may really understand and estimate them with unbiassed judgment.

That religion had degenerated was both felt and admitted by Chrysostom. Amidst such a mass of corruption, as the declining Empire was, the salt had lost its savour. With a melancholy and touching metaphor he compares the Church to a decayed female clothed in tawdry and faded finery, the relics of happier hours. His words are:—"The present Church is like a woman who has fallen from her former prosperous days, and in many respects only retains the symbols of that ancient prosperity; displaying, indeed, the repositories and caskets of her golden ornaments,

but bereft of her wealth.”¹ The contrast between the lives of Christians then and in the time of the Apostles was patent and truly painful. “If we were to do now as they did,” said he, “we should convert the whole world even without miracles. But we are desirous of enjoying great luxury, rest, and ease; not so they. One hasted from Jerusalem into Illyricum, another into the country of the Indians, another into that of the Moors, this to one part of the world, that to another; whereas we have not the courage even to depart out of our own country, but seek for luxurious living, splendid houses, and all other superfluities.”² “The Church throughout all the world has been overthrown and levelled with the ground, and all alike are overwhelmed with the evil.”³ Even at that period the flame of missionary zeal, which has since then altogether burnt itself out in the Eastern Church, was flickering in the socket. The oil of grace was indeed replenished by the labours of Chrysostom and such holy men, but too soon the supply began again to fail.

We must not then expect to find in the writings of St. Chrysostom a standard by which

¹ *In 1 Cor. Homil. xxxvi. § 5.*

² *Ibid. vi. § 4.*

³ *In Ephes. Homil. x. § 3.*

we are to judge the whole system of Anglican theology, or which we are desirous of adopting for ourselves. There are germs at least of doctrinal error which our Reformed Church has disallowed, of which St. Chrysostom little anticipated the future growth. It is not our purpose to trace out the particulars in which he differs from the Church of England. It will be sufficient to remember the words of our XIXth Article.

“As the Church of *Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch*, have erred; so also the Church of *Rome* hath erred, not only in their living and manner of Ceremonies, but also in matters of Faith.”

Since the doctrines which he taught may be considered to be the orthodoxy of his time, they demand here a brief examination. And we do but express his sense of their importance when we first turn our attention to the sacraments.

As regards the doctrine of baptism he confirmed the unanimous voice of the early Church. The change wrought in it was to him as great a miracle of grace as the restoration to life of a dead body, because a soul which had been dead in sin was revived.⁴ We are born by the water of

⁴ *De Resurrectione Mort. Homil.* § 8.

Baptism.⁵ The ordinance itself is, he says, styled in God's Word, the bath or "laver of regeneration," illumination, a burial, circumcision, a cross; it is purification.⁶ In it the old man is destroyed, the new man made alive;⁷ all past sins are remitted,⁸ and grace is vouchsafed wherewith to resist sin for the future.⁹ The unbaptized man wore the raiment of death, cursing and perdition; he had not yet received his Lord's token; he had not the royal watchword; he was a stranger and an alien.¹ But the baptized had put on a royal vestment of purple tinged¹ with the Lord's blood, a diadem the brightness of which surpassed the sunbeams.² As the earth was created after the Spirit of God had moved over the waters, so the soul of man is created and formed in the water of Baptism. God then not only says, "Let us make man in our image after our likeness;" he admits men to become sons of God. The catechumens then embrace their Lord, nay

⁵ *Quales ducendæ sint uxores, Homil. § 3.*

⁶ *Ad Illum. Catechesis, i. § 2; 2 Cor. Homil. iii. § 7.* Chrysostom's Scriptural references are to *Tit. iii. 5; Heb. vi. 4; x. 32; Rom. vi. 4, 6; Col. ii. 11.*

⁷ *De Beato Abraham, Homil. § 3.*

⁸ *In Genes. Homil. xxvii. § 1.*

⁹ *In Rom. Homil. xi. § 1.*

In Joan. Homil. xxv. § 1.

² *Ad Illum. Catechesis, i. § 1.*

more they are incorporated with Him.³ At the same time we are told that Baptism entails peculiar obligations upon the recipients, and it profits us nothing if we live unholy.⁴

The full import of these passages can, however, be scarcely understood without remembering that while infant baptism was in St. Chrysostom's time generally recognized as an apostolical institution, it was still very far from being generally introduced into practice in the Greek Church.⁵ The addresses of St. Chrysostom evidently suppose that the candidates for Baptism have arrived at an age at which they are capable of faith and repentance, and while he protests against the superstitious and immoral practice of deferring Baptism till the near approach of death, he assumes in general a season of preparation, and enlarges upon the blessings assured to the worthy receiving.

Holy Communion was generally styled by St. Chrysostom the Eucharist, and his opinion of its importance is thus expressed :—"As none can enter the kingdom of heaven, except he be

³ *In Coloss. Homil. vi. § 4; De Capto Eutropio Homil. § 11.*

⁴ *In Dictum Pauli, Nolo vos ignorare, &c., Homil. § 6.*

⁵ *Neander's History of Christianity, English translation, vol. iv. p. 452.*

born again of water and the Spirit, so also is he cast out from eternal life who does not eat the flesh of the Lord, and drink His blood, which are presented by the hands of the priest.”⁶ Another passage is remarkable, and as it has been often quoted in favour of transubstantiation it should be given entire. In comparing the Lord’s table with the Last Supper before His crucifixion, he says, “Christ is present, and the same who adorned that table then adorns it now. For it is not a man who causes that the things set before you become the body and blood of Christ, but Christ Who was crucified for us. In outward appearance the priest stands and says these words, but the power and grace are of God. ‘This is my body,’ he says. These words change⁷ the form of the elements. And as that voice which said, ‘Increase and multiply and replenish the earth’ was once spoken, but through all time confers upon our nature the power of procreating children; so this voice which was once spoken prepares a perfect sacrifice at every table in the churches from that day to this, and even until His coming.”⁸ We must remember that at this time

⁶ *De Sacerdotio*, lib. iii. § 5.

⁷ μεταρρυθμίζει.

⁸ *De Proditione Judæ*, *Homil.* i. § 6.

the doctrine of *transubstantiation*, as formally defined by the Schoolmen was unknown, and that expressions, which might afterwards have been more guarded, were used in an inexact and rhetorical manner. Still it can scarcely be denied that the language of St. Chrysostom proves that the ideas which were afterwards formalized into the Romish dogma of transubstantiation had by this time made considerable progress in the Churches of Constantinople and Antioch. We note however, the doctrine was yet only in the course of formation. It will also be observed that the word "altar" is not used, but "table," and in the next Homily we are told that the benefits of the Eucharist are confined to those who "partake worthily." The ordinance is, as in the oldest liturgies, styled a sacrifice; but we have seen that such a term was applied even to the conversion of the Gentiles. In conformity with the ancient fathers an *unbloody sacrifice* is said to be offered.⁹

If we refer to other passages we find the testimony of St. Chrysostom as strong as a Protestant divine's against the Roman dogma of transubstantiation. It is true, he says, that before consecration we call it bread, and

⁹ *De Proditione Judæ, Homil. ii. § 6.*

¹⁰ *In S. Eustathium, Homil. § 2.*

after consecration it is worthy to be called the body of the Lord, *yet the nature of bread has remained*, and it is only the body and blood of Christ *mystically*.¹ Yet he distinctly teaches the doctrine of a Real Presence. In explaining the words "the cup of blessing which we bless is it not the communion of the blood of Christ," he declares that that which flowed from our Saviour's side is set before the worshipper;² and again, that if any one supposes that the Eucharist is less than the body of Christ, he is ignorant of the presence and operation of Christ.³ Other passages also to the same effect might easily be produced.⁴

The truth is, that as Chrysostom knew nothing of the subtleties of the schoolmen, and of those definitions to which the Council of Trent has committed the Church of Rome, so neither had he made the Zuinglian discoveries according to which the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper are only significant emblems. He took the words of our Lord and His Apostle as he found them. He did not attempt

¹ *Ad Cæsarium Monachum Epist.* "De Resurrectione Mort. Homil. § 8.

² *In 1 Cor. Homil. xxiv. § 1.*

³ *In 2 Tim. Homil. ii. § 4.*

⁴ *In particular In Matt. Homil. l. al. li. § 2; lxxxii. al. lxxxiii. § 5.*

to explain them fully, but regarded the Eucharist as an awful mystery which all must approach with reverence and fear⁵ and as a sacrifice, which is offered as a memorial of Christ crucified for us.⁶

In all his works he speaks with profound respect of these two rites, in distinction to other Christian ordinances; nor is there a hint that he had heard of more than two sacraments of salvation. His words, moreover, are utterly opposed to any compulsory confession of sins to a priest. He regarded auricular confession as permissible, and in many cases as desirable, but disclaimed all wish to make it imperative upon the conscience. "I exhort you over and over again," he said, "I beseech, I implore you to confess frequently to God. I do not bring you as a spectacle to your fellow-servants, nor do I compel you to reveal your sins to men. Lay bare your conscience before God, show him your wounds, and seek for healing appliances from Him."⁷ At the same time, he warns a man against satisfying himself by merely saying, "I

⁵ *In Matt. Homil. xxv. al. xxvi. § 3.*

⁶ *In Hebr. Homil. xvii. §§ 3, 4.*

⁷ *De Incomprehens. Dei Naturâ, Homil. v. § 7; also De Lazaro Concio. iv. § 4. Compare Ad Pop. Antioch. Homil. iii. § 5; De Cruce et Latrone, Homil. i. § 3.*

am a sinner," and urges him to enter into details, and call to mind each particular offence.⁸ The omission of any distinct exhortation to auricular confession is the more remarkable as he preached no fewer than nine consecutive Homilies on penitence, and constantly at other times insisted upon the necessity of unburdening our consciences before Almighty God. He is, however, very decided in maintaining that priests have received "power and commandment to declare and pronounce to penitents the absolution and remission of their sins."⁹

Not only at the Eucharist, as we have seen but also at other times, prayers for the faithful dead were offered, and the practice was much commended, although without any allusion to Purgatory.¹ A mother, a wife, or a child would lay a gift upon the altar on each anniversary of a dear relative's death, in order that he might be remembered in the prayers of the Church.²

A union of departed saints and martyrs with the Church militant was ordinarily believed to be so preserved that a mutual interest one for the other existed between the living and the

⁸ *Non esse ad gratiam concionandum, Homil. § 5.*

⁹ *De Sacerdotio, lib. iii. § 6.*

¹ *Ad Pop. Antioch. Homil. xxi. § 3.*

² *In Acta Apost. Homil. xxix. § 3.*

dead. The saints were therefore said to be associated with us in prayer,³ and their intercessions were earnestly sought.⁴ Indeed, there is no reason to doubt that the invocation of saints was a part of popular religion. Yet St. Chrysostom was particularly earnest in condemning the worship of saints and angels. Neither man (he says), nor angels, nor archangels ought to be adored by human nature; we must serve God only.⁵ The Devil, he declares, introduced invocations of angels, that he might lower the dignity of man. Christ appeals to us, and calls upon us to invoke Him; never then let us suffer angel, archangel, or cherubim to be worshipped. They themselves will repudiate us when they see their Master thus dishonoured.⁶ As for Mariolatry, there is not a trace of it. Chrysostom, of course, speaks of the Mother of our Lord with respect, and considers that she was ever Virgin. He argues that she did not cohabit with Joseph after the birth of Christ; for, if she had, our Lord would not on the cross have commended

³ *De S. Meletio, Homil. § 3.*

⁴ *Contra Iudæos et Theatros, Homil. § 1; In Genes. Homil. xliv. §§ 1, 2.*

⁵ *In Coloss. Homil. v. § 1.* Θεραπεύειν is the word used. See also *Homil. vii. § 1.*

⁶ *Ibid. Homil. ix. § 2.*

her to St. John's care, as though she had no husband.⁷

The relics of saints were preserved with great care and reverence, and peculiar efficacy was attributed to them. They were said to hold the second place after the preaching of the Word in inciting men to follow the examples of those who slept in Jesus;⁸ they were spiritual fountains;⁹ they put to flight devils;¹ they had in themselves great virtue,² were an inexhaustible treasury,³ and protected the city as with an impregnable fortification.⁴

But how are we to account for the omission of any reference to images in churches? Surely by supposing that images were not admitted. Montfaucon felt this, and in a marginal note suggested that they are mentioned in one passage: but the careful reader perceives that when Chrysostom there speaks of statues, he means the souls of men, just as immediately afterwards, he says, with reference to Gal. ii. 9,

⁷ *In Matt. Homil. v. § 3.*

⁸ *De S. Babyla Lib. § ii.*

⁹ *In S. Eustathium, Homil. § 2.*

¹ *In SS. Maccabæos, Homil. i. § 1.*

² *De SS. Bernice et Prosdoce Homil. § 7.*

³ *De SS. Martyribus Sermo. § 2.*

⁴ *In Martyres Egyptios. Homil. § 1.*

that men are pillars.⁵ Another passage seems to prove that at least no images of our Lord were placed before the congregation. Speaking of Christ's majestic appearance, he says, "Perhaps you are now seized with the desire of beholding that image; but if we will, we may see a far better one."⁶

The sign of the cross was constantly made on the countenance with the finger by all classes, and the figure of the cross was to be seen everywhere. It was an ornament on the imperial crown; it was in houses, in the Forum, in deserts, on roads, on mountains, in forests, at sea, in ships, on islands, on beds, on clothes, on weapons, in bed-chambers and banqueting-rooms, on gold and silver vases; it was painted on walls, on the tops of houses, and on books; it was even stained on the foreheads, not only of the vulgar, but of royalty itself.⁷ Pieces of the true cross were in great demand, and, when set in gold, were worn as ornaments for the neck.⁸

⁵ *In Ephes. Homil. x. § 2.*

⁶ *In Matt. Homil. xxvii. al. xxviii. § 2, lxxviii. al. lxxix. § 4.*

⁷ *Expos. in Psalm. cix. § 6; In Matt. Homil. liv. al. lv. § 4.* Neander shows that this was the case by references to St. Augustin. See note, vol. iii. p. 386, of his *Church History*.

⁸ *Quod Christus sit Deus Lib. § 10.*

The belief that miracles were still wrought seems to have been confined to the credulous. Yet St. Chrysostom admitted that St. Babylas, after his death, appeared to a certain person, and he testified also that, through faith, many diseases had been cured by oil consecrated in church.⁹ However he flatly denied that miracles, as the term is usually understood, were ever at that time exhibited.¹

Pilgrimages to the Holy Land were of frequent occurrence, and at Bethlehem in particular there was an immense concourse of Christians desiring to see the place where our Lord was born.² Many persons also went to Arabia that they might see the dunghill upon which Job sat in affliction, and kiss the ground on which his spiritual victories were gained.³ The remains of Noah's ark were also said to be exhibited on the mountains of Armenia.⁴ The post at which our Saviour was scourged was shown at Jerusalem;⁵ and the places where St. Paul lodged,

⁹ *De S. Babyla Lib.* § 12; *In Matt. Homil.* xxxii. § 6.
See *James* v. 14, 15.

¹ *In Colos. Homil.* viii. § 5; *In 1 Tim. Homil.* § 3; *De S. Pentecoste, Homil.* i. § 4.

² *Contra Judæos et Gentiles Lib.* § 3.

³ *Ad Pop. Antioch. Homil.* v. § 1.

⁴ *De Perfectâ Caritate Homil.* § 7.

⁵ *In Acta Apost. Homil.* ii. § 5.

where he was bound, and where he sat and discoursed were still pointed out.* V

At this period in particular men's minds were at work in developing, or rather corrupting the essential truths of Christianity. Towards the close of St. Chrysostom's life those controversies sprang up concerning the relations of God's grace and man's free will, which have continued to the present time. Julian and Anianus, who were Pelagians, subsequently declared that John had favoured their opinions, and certainly, as no dispute had arisen before on the subject, he did not always express himself with that accuracy which, under other circumstances, he would have observed. Like the great St. Augustine, he seems to contradict himself on these points; at one time to deny the necessity of prevenient grace, at another to maintain that we can do nothing whatever without Divine assistance.⁷

His statements appear to be as follows:—We are taught in Scripture that, as faith is imputed to us for righteousness, so our good works, and even the afflictions which we suffer are imputed to us for the forgiveness of our sins;

* *In Rom. Homil. xxx. § 4.*

⁷ Compare *Habentes eundem Spiritum, Homil. i. § 5,* and *In Joan. Homil. xviii. al. xvii. § 3,* on the side of free will, with *In Genes. Homil. lix. § 5,* on the other side.

but that nothing, not even prayer itself, can be of any avail to us without the aid of Divine grace; that this grace does not act upon us of necessity and independently of the human will, which is free.⁸ Good works which spring from faith in Christ, and are wrought in imitation of His example, obtain for us eternal life;⁹ but faith itself is the gift of God;¹ it is the mother, head, and root of good works,² and through faith without works of the law we obtain salvation.³

We have frequent allusions to the *Disciplina arcani*, which was still preserved. Catechumens were gradually admitted to a knowledge of the Christian mysteries, and the full disclosure was reserved until they had been baptized.⁴ Before that time the preacher did not allude to the Lord's Supper when they were present, unless he clothed his teaching in dark and obscure language. As St. Chrysostom expresses it, he

⁸ *De Decem Millium talent. debitore*, Homil. §§ 5, 6; *De Mutatione Nominum*, Homil. iii. § 6; *Ad eos qui scandalizati sunt*, Lib. § 2.

⁹ *In Joan. Homil. xl. al. xxxix. § 5.*

¹ *Habentes eundem Spiritum*, Homil. i. § 5.

² *In Matt. Homil. xxxiii. al. xxxiv. § 2*; *In Joan. Homil. xxxiii. al. xxxii. § 1.*

In Matt. Homil. xxvi. al. xxvii. § 4.

⁴ *Ad illumin. Catechesis i. § 1.*

spoke to them "through a veil."⁵ They were not even permitted to know the words which were used at the ordination of clergy.⁶ We have an anecdote which illustrates the care which the Church required to be taken, and also the laxity which had crept in. At one time, when their bishop was absent, the presbyters had fallen into such careless habits that, in a single night, they baptized several thousand persons without previously communicating to them any religious instruction. But a friend of St. Chrysostom, a deacon, collected one or two hundred, and passed the remainder of the night in catechizing them so that they might not come without previous initiation to the Holy Mysteries. Many were so jealous of the young deacon as to see in this worthy act only an evidence of his ambition; but all good men highly approved of his conduct.⁷

Monastic institutions had become numerous, and were bearing both good and bad fruits. Many great souls were enabled by their means to throw off earthly shackles, and have all their conversation in heaven. The monks were divided

⁵ *In 1 Cor. Homil. xl. § 1; In Matt. Homil. xxiii. al. xxiv. § 3.*

⁶ *In 2 Cor. Homil. xviii. § 3.*

⁷ *In Acta Apost. Homil. xlv. § 3.*

into Anchorites and Cænobites. The former lived in caves or huts, sometimes in the open air, and were clothed in the skins of beasts. They were the most respected; their advice was listened to with attention by the great and powerful, and frequently at a period of national calamity their instructions had great weight, or their intercessions availed for the relief of sufferers. There was a remarkable instance of this during the troubles of Antioch. The heathen philosophers fled from the city, and not one remained to assist the people with his authority and counsel in the common danger; but the monks left their cells, flocked into the city, and did their utmost to alleviate the general misery. They then boldly addressed the judges who had come to pass sentence upon the insurrectionary citizens, besought them to use their authority with lenity and moderation, and successfully interceded for the guilty with the Imperial Commissioners.⁸

The vows of such as went into a cloister were not irrevocable, and many left it to enter the marriage state. Even whilst residing in the monastery they could retain possession of their property, and, if they pleased, had liberty to dispense it; but they seem to have generally

⁸ *Ad Pop. Antioch. Homil. xvii. § 2.*

renounced their possessions. It was not uncommon for young men to reside for a time in monasteries, that they might be educated and trained under wholesome discipline.⁹

Each institution had its president. At his command all the inmates were accustomed to rise before dawn and meet together for prayer. They would, after that, chant the matin service, and then engage in manual labour; some in agriculture, others in gardening, others in drawing water or weaving; some would occupy themselves in their cells with the study of Scripture or in copying and composing literary works. Their garments were of goat's or camel's hair. They were their own servants. Their food was bread and salt, with oil occasionally and a few herbs. They fasted often. Their conversation was chiefly of Christ, heaven, and eternity. Their day was divided into four parts, in each of which they praised God in psalms and hymns—these were the third, sixth, ninth hours, and the time of vespers.¹ After supper the monks of Antioch used to sing a hymn, the words of which were as follows:—"Blessed God, Who feedest me

⁹ *Adv. Oppugn. Vitæ Monast.* lib. iii. §§ 15, 18.

¹ *In Matt. Homil.* lxxviii. al. lxi. § 3, lxi. al. lx. § 3; *In Rom. Homil.* xiii. § 7; *In 1 Tim. Homil.* xiv. §§ 3-5; *Ad Pop. Antioch. Homil.* xvii. § 1.

from my youth up, Who givest food to all flesh, fill our hearts with joy and gladness, that always having a sufficiency we may abound unto every good work in Christ Jesus our Lord; with Whom and the Holy Spirit be unto Thee glory, honour, and might for ever. Amen. Glory to thee, O Lord; glory to Thee, O Holy One; glory to Thee, O King, that Thou hast given us meat to make us glad. Fill us with the Holy Ghost that we may be found well-pleasing before Thee, and not be ashamed when Thou renderest to every man according to his works." St. Chrysostom comments upon this grace at some length, pointing out how Scriptural it is in conception and expression.²

From what has been already written it may be concluded that Chrysostom was an ardent admirer of monastic life. He speaks in glowing terms of "the blessed and great Anthony," the father of monks, whose biography had been written even then; and he invites his hearers to imitate him.³ He declared that in monasteries were fulfilled the Psalmist's words, "The voice of joy and health is in the dwellings of the righteous," and that there was the devotion of St.

² *In Matt. Homil. lv. al. lvi. § 5.*

³ *In Matt. Homil. viii. § 5.*

Paul when he said, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Such a life appeared to him one of intense happiness. It robbed death of its sting; indeed, he said that the monks ceased to regard the separation of the soul from the body as death. They did not say, "Such an one is dead," but "such an one is perfected;" and then they would rejoice, offer thanksgivings, and implore that they might have such a happy termination of their labours and see Christ.

Yet although he often wrote and spoke in defence of the cloister, he was far from recommending it on all occasions. There were times when he considered it right to restrain people from entering monasteries, and he felt that they were lowering the tone of society by withdrawing from the world the influence of all whose sentiments were particularly earnest and devotional.⁴

A profession of celibacy was becoming far too fashionable amongst both men and women.⁵ Ladies wished to obtain credit for it, when in reality they were rather carnally-minded than otherwise. And persons of practical piety were not a little scandalized at seeing men, who abstained from marriage on the plea of devotion,

⁴ *In 1 Cor. Homil. vi. § 4.*

⁵ *In Rom. Homil. xiii. § 7.*

keeping as housekeepers professed virgins, who were called canonical women or regulars. It was very disreputable, as Chrysostom remarked, to see a woman's shoes, girdle, head-dress, reticule, distaff, netting-needles, combs, and other things which need not be mentioned, lying about the house of one who pretended to be a solitary.⁶ There were some rich hypocrites who lived in a regular seraglio, and whilst they professed to be abstracted from worldly cares were the ministers of woman's vanity. They might be seen carrying a lady's vases to the silversmiths for repairs, or asking whether her looking-glass was ready, whether the caddy was mended, or the vinaigrette had been sent back. For these false sisters still held so closely to the frivolities of the world, that they had more bottles on their toilette than secular dames had. Then other such gentlemen might be seen at the perfumers inquiring about scents, going from thence to the linendrapers, and then passing their whole time in shopping for their female friends. They lived in the closest intimacy with these ladies. They might say that their attachment was perfectly pure, but their

⁶ These "subintroduced sisters," as they were styled, are said to have been peculiar to Antioch.—Euseb. *Hist. Ecc. lib. vii. cap. 30.*

priest did not believe a word of it; for he knew very well what human nature was. They said that they showed these young women hospitality as a matter of charity; but he replied that there were plenty of old, deformed, and blind women to be met with; why did they not collect them? "I beseech you," said he, excited by their shocking violation of all decency, "I implore you, I throw myself at your feet, and I entreat you in every way to be persuaded, and refrain from this intoxication."'

Many monks, too, were idle fellows, who had retired to monasteries for the sake of enjoying repose. Indeed, Chrysostom frankly confesses that he himself, when meditating such a step, had been too anxious in inquiring about the comforts which he might hope to enjoy. He wished to know how he could be provided with the necessaries of life, whether he could have fresh bread every day, whether he would be obliged to prepare his food with the oil which was used for the lamps, whether he would be restricted to a vegetable diet, and be compelled to work hard, and carry wood or draw water, all questions natural enough for a man of the world to propose, but scarcely becoming a man who

⁷ *Contra eos qui subintroductas habent virgines, Opusc.*

was professing to relinquish the world and its enjoyments."

However, in spite of the scandalous or lazy lives of monks and virgins, the tendency of the age was to entertain an enthusiastic admiration of celibacy. Nor was it Chrysostom's object to suppress the inclination for such a life, but to keep it within the bounds of moderation, to subject it to reason, and join it inseparably with growth in grace, purity, and holiness.⁹ Certainly his earlier

⁹ *De Compunctione*, lib. i. § 6. As the reader may like to know what an enemy thought of the monks of that generation, I quote the words of Julian the Apostate. He is lecturing the false cynics, and in reference to monks says, "Most part of them have forsaken but very little property, and, in return for that little, they have scraped together what they could from all sides, and managed moreover to get themselves great honour, a numerous retinue of servants and dependants. So it is with you, except that you do not make so much profit as they do; this, however, does not depend on you, but on us who have more sense than those silly people; and also because you have no pretext for collecting money in a reputable way, as they have, under the so-called name of alms. In every other respect you are like them; you have abandoned your father-land as they have; you go about in all directions; and are more burdensome to the court than they, and that with the more impudence, inasmuch as they are invited thither, whilst you are driven away."—Neander's *Emperor Julian and his Generation*, § iii.

⁹ *De S. Theclâ Homil.*; *Ad Olymp. Ep.* ii. § 7; *De Verbis, Habentes eundem Spiritum, Homil.* i. § 6; *Quod regulares fœminæ viris cohabitare non debeant, Opusc.* § 6.

compositions chiefly display his love for celibacy, and although his opinion in its favour was never retracted, yet in after-life his enthusiasm was moderated.

Asceticism was carried to an extravagant height. Some solitaries contrived to exist without tasting even water,¹ and others, in imitation of the Manichees, mutilated themselves, but such conduct met with St. Chrysostom's strong condemnation.²

We have no proof that any Papal supremacy was acknowledged. It is true that considerable respect was shown both in the East and West for the Bishop of Rome, yet not in virtue of his succession from St. Peter. That Apostle was indeed regarded as the Coryphæus, or chief of the Apostles,³ and so sensitive was St. Chrysostom in maintaining his dignity that he employs some sophistry to show how St. Paul did not actually, as is stated, "withstand him to the face."⁴ He also admitted that St. Peter visited Rome, and that, according to some, Linus succeeded him in the episcopal chair.⁵ Still he deduces no argu-

¹ *In Matt. Homil. xxi. al. xxii. § 4.*

² *In Galat. chap. v. 12.*

³ *De decem millium talent. debitor, Homil. § 3; In 1 Cor. Homil. xxxviii. § 4.*

⁴ *In illud, In faciem Petro restiti, Homil. §§ 17, 18.*

⁵ *In 2 Tim. Homil. x. § 3.*

ment from the circumstances for the supremacy of Rome. On the contrary, from the pre-eminence of St. Peter in the Apostolic college, he derives distinguished claims for the Church of Antioch, which he styles "the chair of St. Peter," "the mother of all churches," and in which he considers our Lord's words were fulfilled, "Upon this rock will I build My Church."⁶

I have thus selected for notice such doctrines as were characteristic of that age, or are matters of controversy in this. It has been my object to represent them exactly as they are seen in St. Chrysostom's works. Probably there is no Christian Church at the present time which would accept them all without protest. They are the first shoots of opinions which, having since grown up and put forth branches, have afforded to some a pleasant shade under their boughs, and to others have been as the venom of the upas tree. Only let us not forget that such as we now disown are objected to on account of the gross errors into which they have since been developed. If we had lived in that age, or if we had not the history of intervening ages to warn us, we should certainly not quarrel with that affectionate reverence which was then expressed for the remains

⁶ *In inscriptionem Actorum, Homil. ii. §§ 1 et 6.*

of saints and martyrs. Although with the Twenty-second Article of the Anglican Church we now pronounce the Romish doctrine of the Invocation of Saints "a fond thing, vainly invented," yet we would not rashly condemn the piety which believed that the dead in Christ are in the same communion with those who are alive in Christ; that therefore the dead must take a deep interest in the living; that the intercessions which the saints freely offered when they were upon earth must be as freely offered, and be at least as availing now that they are nearer their Saviour. We acknowledge, indeed, with sorrow, that the pious of those days were often inclined to superstition; but, on the whole, it was with the desire of comprehending that attractive and imposing picture which St. Paul exhibits to the Hebrews of "the city of the living God," with its "innumerable company of angels," and "the spirits of just men made perfect."

And although we must regard as unscriptural some of the doctrines which we have enumerated, still the reader must in fairness admit that St. Chrysostom always built his instructions upon the true foundation, and that he brought them to the test of God's Word. "Other foundation can no man lay than that

which is laid," he said; "on that then let us build: let us hold to the foundation, as the branch to the vine, and let there be nothing mediate between us and Christ; for if anything come between us, immediately we are undone. For the branch draws its nourishment by union with the stock, and the building stands by the foundation to which it is joined. If it is separated, it is ruined, for it has nothing wherewith to support itself. Let us not, then, merely hold to Christ, but be united to Him. If we are separated, we are ruined."⁷ The more we read of this good man's works, and the closer we examine them, the more are we satisfied that he drew from the fountain-head. We shall rarely meet with a modern divine of any school who does not derive his theology, or at least his mode of expressing it, from some standard works, articles of faith, or other formularies; but of the twelve volumes which compose St. Chrysostom's works eight are expositions of Holy Writ, in which he seldom refers to any uninspired authorities, and always gives the literal sense of passages, avoiding with singular consistency allegorical interpretations. Maintaining, as he did, that a large portion of

⁷ In 1 Cor. Homil. viii. § 4.

the Scriptures are intelligible to all, he laboured earnestly and successfully that the people might learn from them. "Wait for no other teacher," he said; "you have the Word of God. No one teaches you as it does. Hear, all you men of the world: get possession of Bibles, which are the medicine of the soul.^a The cause of all evils is that men do not know the Scriptures."^b Heathen philosophers, he declared, sought to render their theories attractive with meretricious ornaments; but Christians, like some modest damsel who will not add to the charms of nature, are satisfied with preaching God's Word with simplicity, and in its unadorned beauty.¹

We may gather from what has been said that St. Chrysostom could never have become a modern Romanist. Rare, but at the same time respectful, as are his allusions to the Blessed Virgin, we can conceive that if he were now to visit Rome or Belgium, with what astonishment he would see Divine honours paid to the "Queen of Heaven," and the image of meek Mary more an object of adoration than the Creator Himself. Suppose

^a κτᾶσθε βιβλία φάρμακα τῆς ψυχῆς.

^b In *Colos. Homil.* ix. § 1.

¹ *Homil. Habita postquam Presbyter Gothus, &c.* § 1.

him then turning to the Church of England. He would find a majority of her clergy reverencing the holy rites of antiquity, warned, indeed, by results of the dangerous tendencies of some practices which he innocently sought to establish; he would also find others shrinking, with an unreasonable but natural dread, from ecclesiastical discipline, and rejecting some most spiritual aids to devotion; but he would see her opening the Bible and summoning all to read, refusing to make confession compulsory on pain of exclusion from communion, and, like himself, knowing nothing about the infallibility of the "Holy Roman Church." He would find her speaking with awe of the sacramental mysteries, but not daring to deprive the laity of "the cup of blessing." In short, we can have no doubt that, however much he might wish to see certain reforms introduced, however much he might feel disposed to launch the bolts of his eloquence against our indifference and our positive corruption, yet, on the whole, he would agree that the Anglican Church is the truest representative of Christianity, and that in her communion, he could find rest and happiness.

CHAPTER V.

SECTS AND SUPERSTITIONS.

Docetæ.—Valentinians.—Marcionists.—Pantheism.—Anthropomorphites.—Arianism and Sabellianism.—Anomeans.—Paulians.—Melchisedecites.—Novatians.—Macedonians.—Meletians and Eustathians.—Acrimony.—St. Chrysostom's liberality; love of Catholic truth.—Miscellaneous errors.—Heathenism; method of contending with it.—Judaism.—Teetotalism.—Popular superstitions; amulets, charms, &c.

THE age in which St. Chrysostom lived, and the one which preceded it, exhibited a large variety of religious opinions, and many conflicting sects. On this subject his works are a fund of information, and they unfold some curiosities of heresy.

The Docetæ, as their name denoted, considered that our blessed Lord did not actually exist on earth, or suffer upon the cross, but that all was a phantasy. The origin of their heresy is attributed by our author to Marcion, a Bishop of

Sinope in the second century, but it must have prevailed before his time, as it is mentioned by St. Ignatius.¹

Some, called by St. Irenæus Valentinians, were of opinion that our Lord had passed through the Blessed Virgin as water through a conduit, and not according to the usual process of gestation.² Others asserted that the incarnation of Christ was a myth.³ The Gnostics are only mentioned by name in one passage, where it is declared that they were so called because they supposed that they knew more than other people.⁴ However, opinions which we know were held by them are attributed to Valentinus and his followers—such, for instance, as the notion that matter existed before the creation of the world;⁵ that God was not the Creator,⁶ but one of a number of Æons, called the Demiurge, was; that the God of the Old Testament was an evil spirit, and distinct from the God of the New Testament.⁷ The Manicheans went

¹ *In Matt. Homil. xliii. al. xliv. § 2; In Hebr. Homil. iv. § 4; In illud, Pater si possibile est, &c., Homil. § 4; Ignat. Ep. ad Trall. § xi.; ad Smyrnæos, § ii.*

² *In Matt. Homil. iv. § .*

³ *Ibid. Homil. viii. § 1.*

⁴ *In 1 Tim. Homil. xviii. § 2.*

⁵ *In Genes. Homil. ii. §§ 3, 4.*

⁶ *In Genes. Sermo i. § 3.*

⁷ *In Matt. Homil. xxxv. al. xxxvi. § 1, lv. al. lvi. § 5.*

still further, and asserted that the Devil was the author of the Old Testament, which, of course, they and similar sects excluded from their catalogue of sacred Scriptures.⁸ The errors of all these persons arose, we are told, from rash speculations regarding the origin of evil.⁹

The followers of Marcion denied that after this life there would be a hell, and argued that God was too merciful to inflict eternal punishments upon any.¹ Their practice of vicarious baptism seems almost too ridiculous to be credible, but yet it was not more extravagant than practices which our own contemporaries have witnessed. If a catechumen happened to die before he could be baptized, they placed an individual under the bed on which the corpse was laid, and then, as if addressing the latter, asked whether he wished to receive holy Baptism. The man under the bed replied in the affirmative, and upon that was baptized as a substitute for the deceased. This practice, they maintained, was taught in Scripture.²

Many of the heretics whom I have enumerated maintained that the divine essence en-

⁸ *De Sacerdotio*, Lib. vi. § 4.

⁹ *Adv. Oppugn. Vitæ Monast.* Lib. iii. § 10.

¹ *In Acta Apost. Homil.* v. § 3; *In Philem. Homil.* iii. § 2.

² *In 1 Cor. Homil.* xl. § 1, See *1 Cor.* xv. 29.

tered into cats, dogs, monkeys, and other animals.³ They were distinguished by garments of a pale yellow and a particularly sanctified demeanour; but they were wolves in sheep's clothing.⁴ Their doctrines are referred to by St. Chrysostom in a great variety of passages, and are described at considerable length. In his days they were considered ancient heresies.

The Anthropomorphites of that period concluded from the words, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," that God had a human form and body.⁵ Their opinion was confirmed, they thought, by all those passages of Scripture in which He is referred to as possessing hands, feet, and eyes. In expounding the seventh Psalm, St. Chrysostom asks such drivellers whether, because it is written, "He will whet His sword," "He hath bent His bow," and "He ordaineth His arrows," they will therefore also argue that there are bows and arrows, swords and grindstones in heaven? Clearly these are figures of speech, and it is extreme folly to take them literally.⁶ Many of

³ *In Diem Natalem J. Christi, Homil.* § 6.

⁴ *In Genes. Sermo.* i. § 3.

⁵ *In Genes. Homil.* viii. § 3.

⁶ *Expos. in Psalm.* vii. § 11; *In Genes. Sermo.* ii. § 2.

his arguments are more than sufficient replies to similar heresies advocated in Mormonite tracts.

The opposing errors of Sabellianism and Arianism are mentioned and condemned: Sabellius, we are told, was an African, who, relying upon our Lord's words, "I and my Father are one," and "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," taught that the Son not only had the same hypostasis, but also the same person as the Father; that the Holy Spirit was not a distinct person; and that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were merely names describing different operations of one Person.⁷ These doctrines were preached with great subtilty by Marcellus of Ancyra and Photinus.⁸ Arius and his disciples are not often noticed, but we learn that that heresiarch insisted upon perverting the distinction of Persons in the Holy Trinity into a distinction of essence, and maintaining that the Word was not eternal, but made from nothing and created; that He was not really the Word or Wisdom of God, but was called so by the figure of speech known as *catachresis*; that His

⁷ *De Consubstantiali Homil.* §§ 2, 4; *In Joan. Homil.* lxxv. al. lxxiv. § 1; *In Philip. Homil.* vi. § 1.

⁸ *In Hebr. Homil.* viii. § 4.

nature was subject to change, and that He knew not the Father, nor even His own nature.⁹

The reason why Arius was so little noticed by St. Chrysostom was that his followers had raised their heads under the new name of Anomœans.¹ We have three homilies which were preached expressly against this sect. Their arrogance and self-sufficiency are exposed with much force. Like other Rationalists, they affected to assume an intellectual superiority over those who received in humble faith the mysteries of Revelation. Indeed, they pretended to have attained to all knowledge, and to know God even as He knew Himself. In other respects their heresy differed little from its parent stock of Arianism.²

Paul of Samosata and his followers, called Paulians, are frequently mentioned. They were much deeper in error than the Arians, and maintained that Christ, the Word of God, began to exist only when He was born of the Virgin Mary, and that He did not exist before

⁹ *De Sacerdotio*, lib. iv. § 4; *In Philip. Homil.* vi. §§ 1, 2.

¹ 'Ανόμοιοι, from ἀνόμοιος, dissimilar, because they said that the Son was dissimilar from the Father.

² *De Incomprehens. Dei Naturâ*, *Homil.* i. § 4, iii. § 1, v. §§ 1, 2, 5; *De petitione filiorum Zebedæi*, *Homil.* § 3; *De Christi Precibus*, *Homil.* § 6.

He was manifested in the flesh.³ There were also some heretics who denied that there would be any resurrection, and appear to have derived their error from this Paul of Samosata. They are named in the same category with him and with Arians, Marcionists, and Manichæans.⁴

A remarkable heresy was that of the Melchisedecites, who argued, from those words of the hundred and tenth Psalm, "Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec," that our Blessed Lord was inferior to the King of Salem, who was in reality the Holy Ghost. St. Chrysostom, however, taught them that Melchisedec was only a type of Christ, who in offering bread and wine foreshadowed the sacrifice of the cross.⁵

The Cathari, called also Novatians, were the Puritans of that age, who plumed themselves upon the spiritual progress which they had made, and had sufficient conceit to assert exclusive claims to religious purity; yet St. Chrysostom thought,

³ *In Dictum Pauli, Nolo vos ignorare, &c., Homil. § 5; De verbis, Habentes eundem Spiritum, Homil. ii. § 4.*

⁴ *In Psalm. cix. § 1; In 1 Cor. Homil. iv. § 6; xvii. § 2.*

⁵ *De Melchisedeco Homil. § 3.* According to Hippolytus the Melchisedecites taught in his age after the example of their founder Theodotus, the banker, that Melchisedec was the power of God, and Christ was His Ikon, or image.—Bunsen's *Hippolytus*, vol. i. p. 93.

in spite of their high pretensions, that they were a most corrupt sect.⁶ They were in the habit of deferring their baptism as long as possible, because they believed that there is no second remission of sins.⁷

Macedonius taught his followers to detract from the honour due to the Third Person in the Holy Trinity, as Arius had blasphemed the Second Person. He is represented as waging war with the Paraclete, and professing to ground his heresy upon Scripture, comparing one portion with another, and not merely arguing from a single passage, like the Melchisedecites. When, then, he met with the words, "All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit," he maintained that they must be explained by the words which precede them, "It is the same God which worketh all in all;" and that when it is said, "All things were made by God," the Spirit is included. In short, he inferred that the Holy Ghost was a mode of operation, but not a Being or Person.⁸

⁶ *In Ephes. Homil. xiv. § 2; Adv. Catharos. Homil. § 2.*

⁷ *In Hebr. Homil. xx. § 1. See Euseb. Hist. Ecc. lib. vi. cap. 43, and S. Cypr. Epist. lxi. et passim.*

⁸ *In S. Romanum Martyrem, Homil. ii. § 2; In illud, In principio erat verbum, &c., Homil. § 1. See St. John i. 3; 1 Cor. xii. 6, 11.*

The disputes of these sects were carried on with the greatest animosity, and often their bitterness against one another was extreme when the differences between them were trifling, or even when their doctrines were identical. This was particularly the case with the Eustathians and Meletians, who all accepted the Catholic faith; but as Bishop Meletius had been consecrated by Arians his followers were anathematized by the partisans of Bishop Eustathius. For long the Eustathians or orthodox had no bishop, but met together with a presbyter named Paulinus; and then St. Chrysostom stepped in as a peacemaker, warning his own friends the Meletians not to utter rash anathemas against their opponents. "As I go about," he said, "I see persons who have no arguments drawn from Holy Scripture, nor indeed are at all acquainted with Scripture. I stand in silence and blush when I see these triflers in a fury, 'understanding neither what they say or whereof they affirm,' venturing only to dogmatize without any learning, and to anathematize things which they know not, so that our doctrines are ridiculed by those who are estranged from the faith, as though we cared nothing for upright conduct, and had not learned to be charitable."⁹

⁹ *De Anathemate, Homil. § 1.*

Indeed St. Chrysostom was never a friend of persecution. He taught his hearers that the true way of dealing with heretics was to pray for them,¹ and not to war with men but with their false opinions. He speaks in high commendation of such Christian Emperors as abstained from employing the civil arm to force the consciences of unbelievers.² "It is not right," he says, "for Christians to overthrow error by compulsion and violence, man's salvation must be wrought by persuasion, discourse, and gentleness."³ "I am not accustomed to persecute, but to be persecuted; not to assail, but to be assailed. And thus Christ triumphed, not crucifying any, but being crucified; not buffeting, but being buffeted."⁴ When we consider that this language proceeded from the archbishop of a Church which, after many years of suffering, had become dominant, we must give him some credit for moderation.

¹ In 1 Tim. Homil. vii. § 2; In S. Phocam Martyrem Homil. § 2.

² De S. Droside Martyre Homil. § 2.

³ De S. Babyla, Contra Julianum et Gentiles Homil. § 3.

⁴ In S. Phocam. Homil. § 2. It is but just to acknowledge that St. Chrysostom had an honourable example set him by his old master, Libanius, who, although a zealous advocate of heathenism, steadily resisted all attempts to persecute Christians.—Neander's *Church History*, vol. iii. § 1.

Where there was such a war of opinions amongst conflicting sects many of course were in the other extreme, and affected to treat all doctrinal opinions with indifference. Such as take little interest in religion find no difficulty in professing a spurious liberality. It appears to them that all the doctrines in dispute are in reality much the same, and they accuse earnest-minded Christians of magnifying differences. Experience, however, corroborates the warning of Chrysostom that wherever such indifference prevails there will, in reality, be a multiplication of divergent dogmas which might have been reconciled to one another by decided yet mild rebukes. "Let those," he says, "who charge us with being contentious in separating from heretics, and say that there is no real difference between us, except what arises from ambition, hear Paul's assertion that such as had but slightly innovated perverted the Gospel. A want of zeal in small matters is the cause of all our calamities; because slight errors escape fitting correction greater ones creep in. As in the body a neglect of wounds generates fever, mortification, and death, so in the soul slight evils overlooked open the door to graver ones. It is accounted a trivial fault that one man should neglect fasting; that another who is established in the pure faith

should shrink from a bold profession of it, and be led by circumstances to dissemble; a third, who may be irritated and threaten to leave the true faith, is excused on the plea of passion and resentment. Thus a thousand similar errors are daily introduced into the Church, which is divided into as many parties, and we are become a laughing-stock to Jews and Greeks. But if a proper rebuke had at first been given to those who attempted slight perversions, and a deflection from the Divine oracles, such a pestilence would not have been generated, nor such a storm had shaken the Churches. You will now understand why Paul calls circumcision a perversion of the Gospel.”^a Surely we may almost regard the writer of this passage as alluding to the unhappy divisions of the present day, and the liberal assumptions of latitudinarians. Elsewhere he warns his hearers against mixing freely with the maintainers of schism thus:—“If, on the one hand, those persons have doctrines contrary to ours, then on that account it is not right to mix with them; if, on the other hand, they hold the same opinions as we do, the reason for not mixing with them is stronger still. And why so? Because then the disease is from lust of authority.

^a *In Galat. i. 7, Comment.*

Shall it be said, their faith is the same; they are orthodox as well as we? If so, why are they not with us? There is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism."⁶

The cause of all heresy is traced to envy, a lust of power, and a want of charity;⁷ but more especially to ignorance, neglect of Holy Scripture,⁸ or to the habit of selecting certain portions, and not taking Scripture as a whole.⁹

Besides the errors which were maintained by organized sects, there were very many others which were from time to time put forth by persons who did not profess to form any separate congregation. Arguments were often brought against a future state of existence, and Chrysostom is said to have written two books in refutation of "the Arabs who asserted that souls perish with the body."¹ Doubtless many sensualists endeavoured to stifle the voice of con-

⁶ *In Ephes. Homil. xi. § 5.* This was an allusion to the orthodox Paulinians, who refused to join Meletius and Flavian, Bishops of the Catholic Church.

⁷ *In 1 Tim. Homil. ii. § 1.*

⁸ *De Lazaro Concio iii. § 3.*

⁹ *In illud, Salutate Priscillam, &c., Homil. § 1.*

¹ Eusebius (*Hist. Ecc. lib. vi. cap. 37*) alludes to a sect which sprang up in Arabia, and asserted that souls perish at death with the body, but will be revived with it at the Resurrection.

science by persuading themselves that such an opinion was sound."² Some believed that souls become after death evil spirits; others attributed such a metamorphose only to those who died a violent death. Some were under a more ferocious error, and are said to have murdered captive children that they might have them for servants in the abode of evil spirits.³ Others, at Antioch, maintained that our body falls here and another rises again;⁴ whilst persons at Constantinople supposed that some souls would, and some would not have part in the Resurrection.⁵ It was also frequently argued that as God was long-suffering He could not punish the wicked in eternal fire; but, answers St. Chrysostom, the very idea of long-suffering implies that God will in the end punish those who reject His mercy;⁶ moreover, God is exhibited to us in history as punishing the wicked, overwhelming the world by a deluge, destroying Sodom, visiting the stiff-necked Jews with His severest afflictions, and we have reason to fear that what has happened will

² *Ad Stagirium*, lib. i. § 8; *In 1 Cor. Homil.* iv. § 6.

³ *In Matt. Homil.* xxviii. al. xxix. § 2; *De Lazaro Concio* i. § 1.

⁴ *In 1 Cor. Homil.* xli. §§ 1, 2; *In 2 Cor. Homil.* x. § 3.

⁵ *In Hebr. Homil.* xix. § 1.

⁶ *In Matt. Homil.* xi. § 7; *In Rom. Homil.* v. § 2.

happen again.' Let them not delude themselves by saying 'God is merciful, and none of these things will happen,' nor let them regard His warnings of future punishments as though they were mere threats to keep children in order, or the exaggerations of a braggart.^b

Heathenism was still defended by many subtle advocates, and Christians often cut a ridiculous figure when attempting to contend against heathen literati with their own weapons. On one occasion Chrysostom heard a Greek and a Christian holding a discussion, and remarked that the Greek said what the Christian, and the Christian what the Greek ought to have said. The Greek declared that Paul was an uneducated man, upon which the Christian contended with great simplicity that he was both more learned and more eloquent than Plato. He did not know that Christians should build an argument upon the fact that the apostles were unlearned men, and that therefore their preaching could not have triumphed by man's wisdom, but by the grace of God. "When our opponents say that the apostles were clowns, let us admit it and add that they were unlearned, illiterate paupers and

^a *In Rom. Homil. xxv. §§ 5, 6; xxxi. § 5.*

^b *In 1 Thess. Homil. viii. § 2; De Compunctione, lib. 1, § 2.*

obscure individuals." These are no reproaches. It redounds to the glory of the apostles that when they were such they became the most illustrious persons in the world.*

Chrysostom suggests a very judicious method of arguing with heathen. Christians should start from some ground common to heathen and themselves. The difficulty was to find such ground. It could not be found even in any fundamental truth of the Gospel. If a Christian were to say that Christ created the world, raised the dead, and wrought miracles, the heathen would simply deny the facts. If he were to speak of Christ's kingdom and hid treasures, the other would laugh. Upon what, then, could both parties agree? Why, both admitted that Christ planted Christianity, and that He founded the Church which is in all the world. From this fact arguments showing His power may be drawn, and it may be concluded that He is very God. The wonderful results in the propagation of the Gospel as compared with the inadequacy of the means, according to human ideas, prove the intervention of Almighty God. The world was conquered by the crucified Jesus and a few ignorant fishermen. This the heathen must

* *In 1 Cor. Homil. iii. § 4.*

admit, and this is a fulcrum of the Gospel lever.¹

In spite of its struggles to retain life, heathenism was near its last gasp. Yet it was dying a natural death. Although not persecuted, but tolerated, its altars, temples, groves, and porticoes were disappearing. Only a few were left standing, and those were chiefly frequented by old women and children." Its dissolution would have been immediate if Christianity had not been in such a degraded and distracted condition. But then, as now, it drew a negative argument from the immoral lives of Christians; and when the credulity of its own votaries was shaken, still they remained greatly perplexed by seeing Christians divided into so many sects. Chrysostom felt the difficulties of Christianity when the heathen sneered at it on this account, but he met them like a Protestant. He asks, "What can we say to a heathen? He comes and says, 'I wish to be a Christian, but I do not know whom I should join, there is so much strife, internal struggle, and confusion amongst you. Which doctrine should I select? Each says, I have the truth. Which shall I follow, for I know nothing of the Scriptures, and all

¹ *Contra Judæos et Gentiles Lib. § 1.*

quote them?" "This," answers Chrysostom, "is in reality a favourable position for us. If we were to say that we follow reason, perplexity would be natural; but if we say that we obey the Scriptures, and they are simple and true, it is easy to form a judgment. If any one agree with Scripture, he is a Christian; if any one opposes it, he is far from coming under this rule. 'But what,' asks the heathen again, 'when one man comes and says that the Scripture is so and so, but you say that it is different, thus interpreting Scripture in different ways, and distracting our minds?'" To this he replies, "Tell me, have you no understanding and judgment? 'How can I judge of your matters?' he says, 'when I have not the means? I wish to be a learner, but you would make me a teacher.'" Then follow the preacher's arguments, which certainly would not now be accepted by heathen as satisfactory. In fact, Chrysostom reasons like a man who feels that he is involved in difficulties, which he is yet reluctant to admit are difficulties.²

The Platonic or Vedantic theory, that human souls are emanations from "The One," or God, and of the same substance with Him, was not

² *In Acta Apost. Homil.* xxxiii. § 4.

uncommon, and was supposed to be confirmed by those words of Genesis,—“He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” The expression “breathed into” was employed as a handle for this false argument. Many also added to this opinion the doctrine of the metempsychosis.³

³ *In Genes. Homil. xiii. § 2.* Many of these Neo Platonists were in a state of transition from heathenism to Christianity. They read the Scriptures and attended Divine Service. Synesius was in this way converted at Constantinople, perhaps by the preaching of Chrysostom. The most tolerant often argued against missionary proposals, as Brahmans do now. “They conceived all different religions to be only different forms of the revelation of one, and the same divine substance, to be one essence in manifold forms; and it was precisely by this manifoldness, as they supposed, that God was most highly honoured. There could not be one single way alone which conducted, exclusive of all others, to the Supreme, hidden, original Essence; it was only by different ways that men could attain to the most hidden mystery of the Divine Being.”—Neander's *Church History*, vol. iii. Others believed that the Supreme Spirit lived only in the eternal act of self-contemplation; others that He had produced other beings of a like nature with Himself, who are the Gods. The former is the Hindu idea, finely expressed in Sir William Jones's “Ode to Naráyana:”—

“Wrapt in eternal solitary shade,
Th' impenetrable gloom of light intense,
Impervious, inaccessible, immense,
Ere spirits were infused or forms display'd,
Brahm his own mind survey'd.”

The latter is expressed by Manu thus:—“He, the Supreme

Fatalism prevailed to a considerable extent, and was also a remnant of heathenism left amongst Christians. Hence the Preacher taught with great earnestness the doctrine of a special Providence, and exposed the folly of attributing events to destiny.⁴

Jews were numerous at Antioch and were permitted to celebrate their festivals publicly. At Constantinople also there were many of them who were well disposed towards St. Chrysostom, showing kindness and consideration for him when persecuted.⁵ But it was a cause to him of great grief when he saw many professing Christians,—“semi-Christians,” as he styled them,—Judaizing so far as to join in Jewish observances, and particularly in keeping the Sabbath and Passover.⁶ One custom was very singular. On their fast-days the Jews used to dance bare-footed in the Forum. They would also collect actors and dancing women at their

Ruler, created an assemblage of inferior deities, with divine attributes.”—Sarga i. Shloka 22. Neander, in his work called *The Emperor Julian and his Generation*, Appendix viii., has made an interesting collection of passages and examples to show the eclecticism of these Neo Platonists and their good disposition towards Christianity.

⁴ *De Perfecta Caritate Homil.* § 3.

⁵ *Post Reditum ab exilio Oratio* i. § 1.

⁶ *Adv. Judæos Oratio* i. § 1.

places of meeting, so that often there was little difference between a synagogue and a theatre.⁷ An oath administered by Jews was supposed by many foolish people to have peculiar effect upon men's consciences, so that if a Christian wished to make a covenant more than usually solemn and binding, he would require the other party to attend and pledge his faith at the synagogue. For the purpose of putting down such practices, St. Chrysostom not only preached against them from the pulpit, but also interfered personally at other times. "Three days ago," he says,— "believe me, I speak the truth,—I saw a free, honourable, decorous and believing matron compelled by a certain impure and stupid fellow, who *appeared* to be a Christian, (for I should not say that one who dared to do such things *was* a sincere Christian,) to enter the place of the Hebrews, and there take an oath about some business regarding which he was engaged in a dispute. But it was not right for her who had partaken of the Divine mysteries to enter that place, and so when she came and called for help, desiring to prevent his wicked violence, I was inflamed with zeal, and starting up with ardour, would not permit her to be dragged any

⁷ *Adv. Judæos Oratio* i. §§ 2, 4.

further to that unlawful act, and rescued her from his iniquitous violence. I then asked the man who was taking her whether he was a Christian, and when he admitted that he was, I earnestly remonstrated, exposing his stupidity and utter folly. I said that he was no better than an ass,^a if, when he said that he worshipped Christ, he dragged any one to the dens of the Jews who crucified Him. In addition to this I taught him from the Holy Gospels, and pointed out to him at considerable length, firstly, that it is not right to swear at all, nor to impose an oath by force; and then that it was not proper that a believer and communicant, nor indeed any one, should be compelled to take such. And when with many and long arguments I had removed his erroneous idea from his mind, I asked him why he left the Church, and dragged her to the Hebrew assemblies? He replied that many persons had assured him that the oaths taken there were more awful.”^b

Some Christians not only joined the Jews in celebrating the feast of trumpets, the feast of tabernacles, and the fast of the great day of

^a This was as common a term of reproach as it is now, and is frequently met with in Terence and Plautus. *Asinus ad tibiam* was a proverb.

^b *Adv. Judæos Oratio* i. § 3.

expiation, but also applied at the synagogues for charms and amulets.¹ A sect of the Novatians feasted on Good Friday, and fasted on Easter Day, like the Jews.²

Perhaps it was a reaction caused by excessive luxury and intemperance, which led a few persons to adopt the principle and practice of total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors. Some even went so far as to refuse wine at the administration of the Eucharist, and to insist that the Sacramental cup should only contain water.³ This was condemned as a wicked heresy; and abstemious as St. Chrysostom himself was, he always opposed the indiscreet zeal of such as forbade the use of fermented drinks. He felt as strongly as any one could the evils of intemperance, but advocated moderation rather than teetotalism. His words are worth recording:—
 “I hear many say when these excesses happen, ‘Would there were no wine.’ O folly! O madness! When other men sin, do you find fault with God’s gifts? And what great madness is this? What? Did the wine, O man, produce this evil? Not the wine, but the intemperance of such as take an evil delight in it. Say then,

¹ *Adv. Judæos Oratio* § 1.

² *In eos qui Pascha jejunant. Contra Jud. Homil. iii. § 5.*

³ *In Matt. Homil. lxxxii. al. lxxxiii. § 2.*

'Would there were no drunkenness, no luxury;' but if you say, 'Would there were no wine,' you will say, going on by degrees, 'Would there were no steel, because of murderers; no night, because of thieves; no light, because of informers; no women, because of adulterers.' But do not so; for this is of a Satanical mind; do not find fault with the wine, but with drunkenness; and when you have met this same man sober, sketch his unseemliness, and say to him, 'Wine was given that we might be cheerful, not that we might behave ourselves unseemly; that we might laugh, not that we might be a laughing-stock; that we might be healthful, not that we might be diseased; that we might correct the weakness of our body, not cast down the power of our soul.'" ⁴ Yet we find here associations for the promotion of temperance strongly recommended. ⁵

An attribution of effects to secondary causes, and a proportionate neglect of the first cause, is an error which naturally springs from heathenism, and is utterly opposed to the true spirit of Christianity. Yet in every country these remnants of idolatrous superstition have been

⁴ *In Matt. Homil.* lvii. al. lviii. §§ 4, 5; *Ad Pop. Antioch. Homil.* i. §§ 2, 4, 5; *In Martyres Homil.* § 1.

⁵ *In 2 Tim. Homil.* i. § 4.

left long after the Gospel had triumphed over idolatry. To Chrysostom they were a continual source of annoyance, and he bitterly lamented that his flock entertained so many absurd prejudices, which it seemed impossible to eradicate. "It is night," he cried, "not among heretics, nor among Greeks only, but also in the multitude on our side, in respect of doctrines and life. For many entirely disbelieve the resurrection, many fortify themselves with their horoscope; many adhere to superstitious observances, and to omens, auguries, and presages. Some likewise employ amulets and charms." ⁶ "You may see a man washing himself from the pollution of a dead body, but from dead works never: and, again, spending much zeal in the pursuit of riches, and supposing that the whole is undone by the crowing of a single cock. Their soul is filled with all sorts of terrors. For instance one will say, 'Such a person was the first who met me, as I was going out of the house;' of course ten thousand evils must certainly ensue. At another time, 'the wretch of a servant in giving me my shoes, held out the left shoe first,'—terrible mishaps and mischiefs! 'I myself in coming out set forth with

⁶ In 1 Cor. Homil. iv. § 6.

the left foot foremost,' and this too is a token of misfortune.⁷ Such are evils within the house. Then, 'As I go out, my right eye shoots up from beneath. This is a sure sign of tears.'⁸ Again, the women, when the reeds strike against the standards, and ring, or when they themselves are scratched by the shuttle, turn this also into a sign. And again, when they strike the web with the shuttle, and do it with some vehemence, and then the reeds on the top from the intensity of the blow strike against the standards and ring, this again they make a sign, and ten thousand things besides as ridiculous. And so if an ass should bray, or a cock should crow, or a man should sneeze, or whatever else may happen, like men bound with ten thousand chains, or confined in the dark,

⁷ The Romans also considered it unlucky to set out or enter any place with the left foot foremost.—See Becker's references to Petronius, Vitruvius, Juvenal, and Propertius.—*Gallus*, § 7.

⁸ The Hindus consider the left to be the lucky side in a woman, the right in a man; the throbbing of the eye is lucky in a man, unlucky in a woman.

"Auspicious signs

Forerun a happy fate, and even now

My throbbing eyeball tells propitious destiny

Shall crown my schemes."

—*Matāṭī and Mādhava*, Act i.

See also Act viii. Wilson's *Hindu Theatre*.

they suspect everything, and are more slavish than all the slaves in the world." He exhorts them to be above such degrading fancies, to live like enlightened persons, and to regard it only as terrible to commit sin, and to offend Almighty God.⁹

Often when he thus entered into the details of superstition, he had at least the satisfaction of seeing that his hearers were heartily ashamed of their puerilities, although they still continued them. They would hide their heads for very shame, but the preacher did not spare them on that account, and proceeded to hold up more of their own extravagancies to their gaze. He reminded them that if on leaving the house they met a one-eyed man or a lame man it was an omen. If a virgin met them, it was a sign that the day would be barren, and unprofitable; if a courtesan, it would be a lucky and profitable day for mercantile speculations.¹ Some for charms or amulets would fasten to their head or feet copper coins of Alexander the Great. They

⁹ *In Ephes. Homil. xii. § 5.*

¹ If a Brahman, on going out of the house, should see a S'rotriya, Agnihotri, or any other Brahman, a beloved and excellent wife, or a cow, the day will be auspicious. If he sees a wicked or naked person, a wretched woman, distilled spirits, or a man with a great nose, the day will be inauspicious.—*Ward on the Hindus*, book iii. chap. i. § 5.

would consult a gossiping old woman about incantations, and if reproached for it say that she was a Christian, and only pronounced the name of God.² Such excuses, however, would not satisfy their archbishop. "On this account especially," said he, "I have an aversion to her and hate her, because she reproaches the name of God by using it; because whilst she says that she is a Christian she displays the actions of the heathen. The devils indeed shouted out the name of God, yet they were devils; so Christ rebuked them and drove them away. "Such incantations were resorted to as philtres by love-sick maidens, and also by women of the town that their charms and wanton airs might be the more attractive." ³

Like the natives of India these professing Christians commenced their superstitious practices at the day of a child's birth, and they were attended by them to their graves. If a married woman were childless, she would have recourse to witchcraft.⁴ When a child had been born, a very curious custom was observed at the time of giving it a name. A number of lamps were lighted, and to each a particular name was

² *Ad Illuminandos Catechesis* ii. § 5.

³ *In Rom. Homil.* xxiv. § 4.

⁴ *Non esse desperandum*, §c., *Homil.* § 5.

assigned. The child was then called after the lamp which continued to burn the longest, and they trusted that thus it would be blessed with long life. Amulets with the names of rivers, bells, and a scarlet thread were then fastened to its little hands. When taken to the bath the nurses and waiting-maids would mark the child's forehead by smearing it with mud. This was to turn away an evil eye, witchcraft, and envy. Ashes, soot, and salt were sometimes used for the same purpose. In fact, whether there was real or imaginary trouble, recourse was always had to "the old woman."⁵ "Many heathen customs are observed by some among us," said Chrysostom again. "Omens, auguries, presages, distinctions of days, a curious attention to the circumstances of their children's birth, and, as soon as they are born, tablets with impious inscriptions placed upon their unhappy head, thereby teaching them from the first to lay aside virtuous endeavours, and drawing them as much as possible under the false domination of fate."⁶

Professional soothsayers were consulted by many who had nominally renounced heathenism. These professors of the dark arts, however, were

⁵ *In 1 Cor. Homil. xii. § 7; In Coloss. Homil. viii. § 5.*

⁶ *In Galat. cap. i. v. 7, Comment.*

shown by St. Chrysostom to be the same as are mentioned in heathen writers. In the course of his argument, he quotes Plato first, and afterwards the response of an ancient oracle which was preserved in the works of Porphyry. Generally the oracles had been silenced,⁷ but the Pythoness was described as still in existence, and as being a female who sits astride upon Apollo's tripod until "the evil spirit, ascending from beneath, and entering the lower part of her body, fills her with madness, and she, with dishevelled hair, begins to play the bacchanal, and to foam at the mouth, and thus, being in a frenzy, to utter the words of her madness."⁸ In like manner, the soothsayers, to whom some of his silly people resorted, seemed beside them-

⁷ *De Laudibus S. Pauli Homil.* iv.

⁸ Yet Prudentius, who wrote about this time, says that the oracles ceased at our Lord's birth:—

"Ex quo mortalem præstrinxit Spiritus alvum,
Spiritus ille Dei, Deus, et se corpore Matris
Induit, atque hominem de virginitate creavit,
Delfica damnatis tacuerunt sortibus antra,
Non tripodas cortina tegit," &c.

Apotheosis 503, &c.

So we have the oracle representing its approaching demise, thus:

"Me puer Hebræus divus, Deus ipse gubernans,
Cedere sede jubet, tristemque subire sub Orcum
Aris ergo dehinc tacitus discedito nostris."

Suidas in Αἰγυπτίους.

selves, being hushed and dragged about like madmen.¹ They were impostors, who were always prophesying, and sometimes, of course, made lucky guesses. "No one takes notice of their failures," he remarked, "but their lucky conjectures are observed. But if these men have any power of prognosticating, bring them to me, a believer. I say not this as magnifying myself (for it is no great honour to be superior to these things), and indeed I am deep laden with sins; but with respect to these matters I will not be humble-minded. By the grace of God, I despise them all. Bring me this pretender to magic; let him, if he has any power of prognosticating, tell me what will happen to me to-morrow. But he will not tell me. For I am under the power of the King, and he has no claim to my allegiance or submission. I am far from his holes and caverns. I was under the King. 'But some one committed theft,' you say, 'and this man discovered it.' This is not always true, certainly, but for the most part absurdities and falsehoods. For they know nothing. If, indeed, they know anything, they ought rather to speak of their own concerns; how the numerous offerings to their idols have

¹ In 1 Cor. *Homil.* xxix. § 1.

been stolen, how so much of their gold has been melted. Why have they not informed the priests?"² Impostures precisely similar to those which are here described are practised to this day in India, and many of the tests suggested might, we have no doubt, be advantageously applied to the clairvoyants of Europe.

Some impostors were astrologers, who cast nativities, and pretended that by consulting the stars they were enabled to look into futurity. Even these men advanced what they thought Scriptural arguments for the truth of astrology, and referred to the star which appeared at our Lord's birth, urging that the wise men took their journey and found their way to the Lord by their skill in this art.³ But, said Chrysostom, "Believe that there is a God and a Providence, and you will not believe that there can be a nativity which holds all things together."⁴

² *In 2 Tim. Homil. viii.* §§ 4, 5.

³ *In Matt. Homil. vi.* § 1, lxxv. al. lxxvi. § 4.

⁴ *In 1 Tim. Homil. i.* § 3. Even the heathen historian was shocked at the follies of that age, and mentioned them with reference to the higher powers. "Many deny that there are higher powers in heaven," said Ammianus, "and will not go into public, nor dine, nor think that they can with prudence bathe before they have scrupulously consulted the almanac, and discovered where, for instance, is the sign of Mercury, or in what part of the constellation Cancer the moon may be."—*Lib. xxviii.* § 4.

Persons who were labouring under disease applied to these soothsayers, in order that an incantation might be repeated over them, or a charm fastened to their persons.⁵ A woman who should on Christian principles refuse to adopt such remedies for a sick child would be considered to have sacrificed him to her own obstinacy. Thus, not only superstition was deeply rooted, but the purest affections were enlisted on its side, and the task of removing it became doubly difficult to the stern but enlightened Reformer.⁶

To some of these heathen prejudices may be traced the origin of our festivities at the New Year. At this period the people of Constantinople thought that if they passed the first day of the moon in jollity, the whole year would be prosperous.⁷ If at such times they were engaged in any work, they were cautious not to utter an unpropitious word. For instance, when sowing they must not talk about a bad crop; when drawing off wine they must not utter a

⁵ *Adv. Judæos Homil.* viii. § 7.

⁶ *In Coloss. Homil.* vii. § 5. The Hindus have incantations for almost every disease, as headache, toothache, fever, dysentery, leprosy, madness, burns, scalds, eruptions on the skin, &c.—*Ward on the Hindus*, book ii. chap. ii. § 26.

⁷ *In Kalendas Homil.* § 2.

syllable about vinegar; when preparing perfumes nothing that was ill-scented must be near.⁸

At funerals, also, the assembled crowd must utter words of good omen.⁹ Lovers offered libations that they might be successful in their amours.¹ It was thought safe for women and children to have the Holy Gospels suspended from their necks,² or at least by their bed-sides.³

I shall conclude this book by grouping together some miscellaneous opinions of the age which could not be appropriately mentioned in other places. We find that even then the discovery of Copernicus had been anticipated, and some maintained that the earth revolved on an axis. "Because their heads are turned," said the unphilosophical satirist, "they say that the world turns. But it does not turn; it stands firm."⁴ We have occasional references

⁸ *In Coloss. Homil. xii. § 4.*

⁹ *In 2 Cor. Homil. xxiii. § 5.*

¹ *In Rom. Homil. xxiv. § 4.*

² *Ad Pop. Antioch. Homil. xix. § 4.*

³ *In 1 Cor. Homil. xliii. § 4.* Hence the popular rhyme—

"Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John

Bless the bed that I lie on."

(See the Oxford translation.)

⁴ *In Tit. Homil. iii. § 3.* We are not told whether this

to India. Thus, its precious stones were in great celebrity;⁵ it was classed amongst the nations which waged the fiercest wars;⁶ Christian altars had been established there,⁷ and the people had learnt Christian philosophy.⁸ We have remarked two curious traditions; one was that Adam had been buried on Mount Calvary, and thus where death had first begun to reign he afterwards raised as his trophy the cross of Jesus.⁹ From the ninth chapter of Genesis and third verse it was inferred that flesh meat had

opinion referred to the revolution of the earth and planets round the sun, or to its rotatory motion upon its own axis. Pythagoras had taught privately the former. According to Cicero, who follows Theophrastus, Hicetas of Syracuse taught the diurnal motion of the earth.—*Academ. Quæst.* lib. iv. § 39.

⁵ *In 1 Tim. Homil. xvii. § 3.*

⁶ *Expos. in Psalm. iv. § 12.*

⁷ *Contra Judæos et Gentiles*, lib. §§ 6, 12.

⁸ *In Joan. Homil. ii. al. i. § 2.* It should be remembered that the Christian Fathers sometimes called Ethiopia and Arabia, as well as Hindustan, by the name of India. Yet Philostorgius tells us that in this century the missionary Theophilus found Christians at Diu; and Cosmas Indicopleustes met with them at Taprobane (Ceylon), Male (Malabar); and a Persian bishop at Calliana, which Neander supposes to be Calcutta, but which is Callian, a very ancient town about thirty miles from Bombay.—*Neander's Church History*, vol. iii. § 1.

⁹ *In Joan. Homil. lxxxv. al. lxxxiv. § 1.*

never been eaten until after the deluge.¹ To the zoologist some traits of animals and historical facts respecting them might be interesting. The ass was noted for kicking, the bull for leaping about, the horse for neighing, the bear for eating voraciously, the mule for surfeiting itself, the camel for remembering injuries, the wolf for plundering, the serpent for wrath, the scorpion for its sting, the fox for its craft.² Stags were unclean, because they fed upon snakes, and this accounted also for the intensity of their thirst.³ The scent of perfumes was said to cause suffocation in swine.

¹ *In Genes. Homil.* xxvii. § 4, al. xxviii. § 1.

² *In Matt. Homil.* iv. § 8.

³ *Expos. in Psalm.* xli. § 5; *In Tit. Homil.* i. § 3. Hence, says St. Chrysostom, the stag derived its name, *ελαφος* or *ελαφος* διὰ τὸ δφεῖς ἐλεῖν. Pliny, in more than one passage of his *Natural History*, states that stags fight with and eat serpents.—*Lib. viii. cap. 32.*

⁴ *In 2 Cor. Homil.* v. § 2.

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